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DISCO e. 1977 DRUMMING

by Joel Rothman

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PREFACE

Rock music ushered in a new era in drumming, leading to a revolutionary change in the use of the bass drum. Before rock music came along, jazz drummers helped to expand the potential of the bass by using it to "kick" coordinated rhythmic figures based mostly on eighth-note triplets. With the advent and development of rock, however, sixteenth-note rhythmic patterns on the bass became commonplace, so drummers had to increase their facility in the area of hand-foot coordination.

Disco drumming, an offshoot of rock playing has helped to foster still another revolutionary change—this time in the way the hi-hat is played. Before disco music, rock drummers played mostly steady eighth-notes on the hi-hat, which was usually kept in a closed position. Consequently, there was little use of the left foot, and many rock drummers found themselves somewhat at a loss when it came to doing any more than playing two and four with the hi-hat. Disco music, however, has changed all that, for it has a unique sound, the most distinctive feature being the "bark" of the hi-hat, usually occurring on the upbeats of 1, 2, 3, or 4. Producing this "bark" is not without its difficulties for the left foot must be called into play constantly, making it incumbent upon the drummer to develop greater coordinative control with both his feet. It is not terribly difficult to play a simple disco beat by maintaining the bass "in four," while opening the hi-hat on offbeats. But being able to play intricate sixteenth-note patterns on the bass as you open and close the hi-hat on different parts of the beat is quite another matter. The degree of coordinative facility necessary for this type of freedom is extensive, and DISCO DRUMMING is designed to show you precisely how to develop that freedom.

Another publication, FOUR WAY COORDINATION FOR ROCK DRUMMING, although not intended for disco drumming specifically, will help to develop the feeling of complete independence with all four limbs, so that one's overall control between the ride cymbal, hi-hat, snare, and bass is greatly enhanced. I highly recommend the use of that book in conjunction with this one.

IMPORTANT: Throughout this study the letter "O" appears above certain notes. It denotes an open hi-hat. Be certain to keep the hi-hat closed on all other notes.

I'm grateful to Daniel Elfassy for his editorial help.

PART ONE

EIGHTH NOTES ON THE HI-HAT

This first section shows most of the places a hi-hat can be opened and closed while playing eighth-notes in 4/4 time. The first page will notate the most common places for opening the hi-hat, such as the upbeats of 1, 2, 3, or 4. The subsequent three pages, however, demonstrate where the hi-hat might be opened on downbeats as well as upbeats. Although this is not a common practice, it does give the reader an opportunity to explore some possibilities which may not have come to mind.

IMPORTANT: The exercises are notated strictly for hi-hat. However, I suggest you play your bass drum on every downbeat, and your snare on 2 and 4 throughout each exercise.

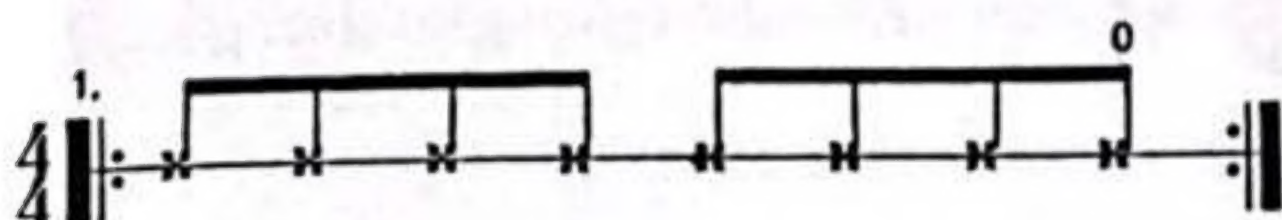
Keep in mind that the letter "O" above a note indicates that the hi-hat cymbals should be opened on that note, and that note alone. Be certain to keep your hi-hat cymbals together on all other notes.

HI-HAT OPENED ON UPBEATS

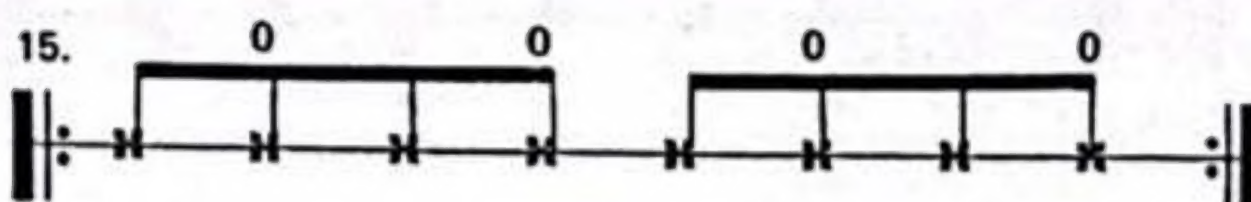
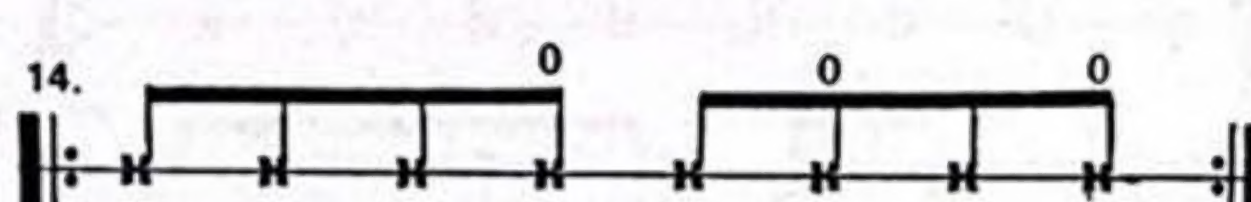
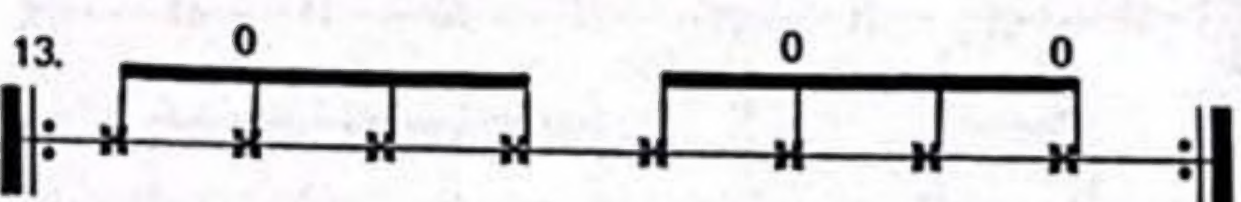
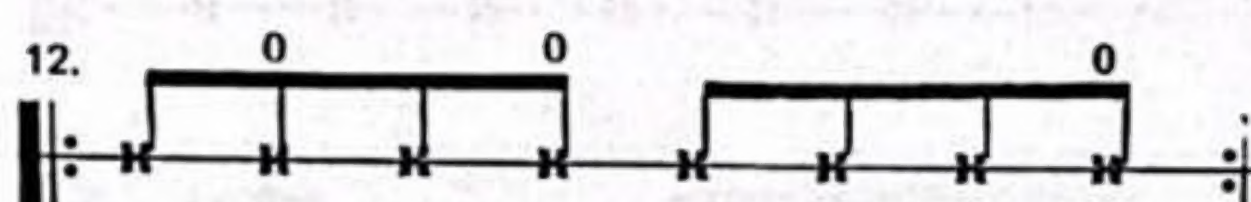
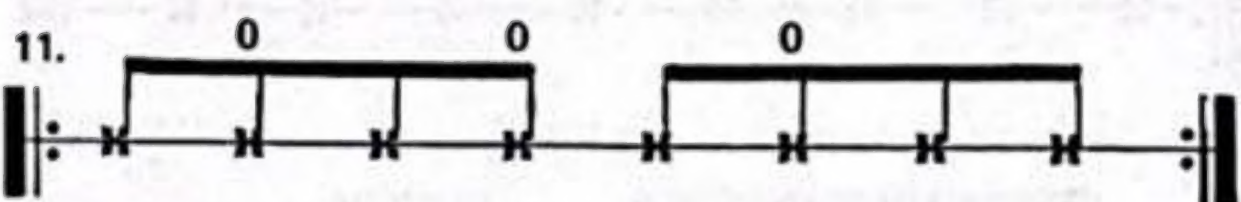
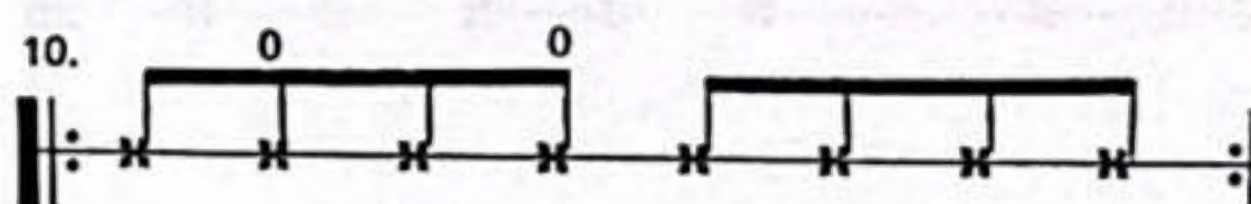
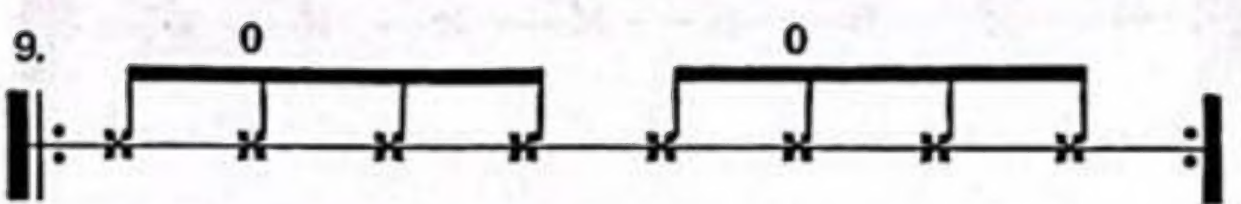
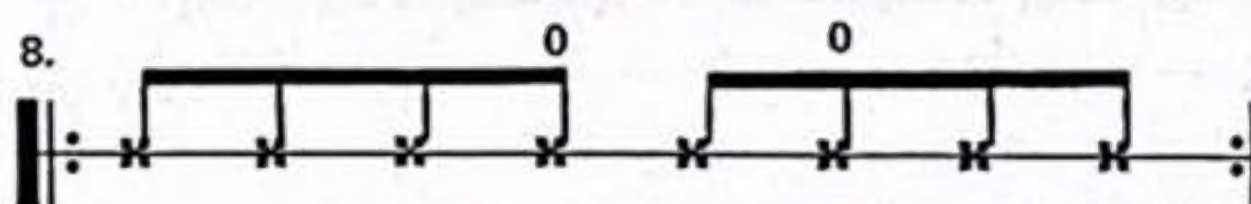
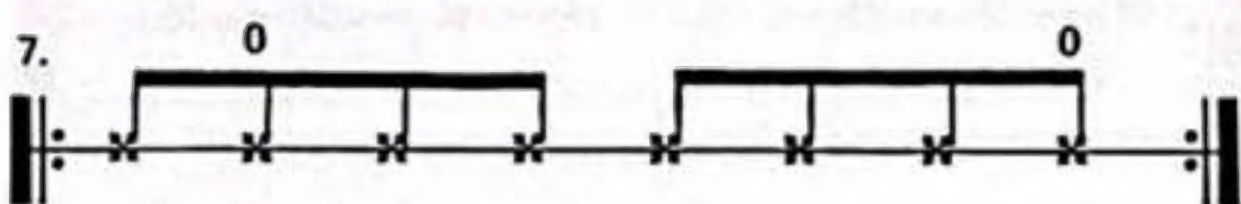
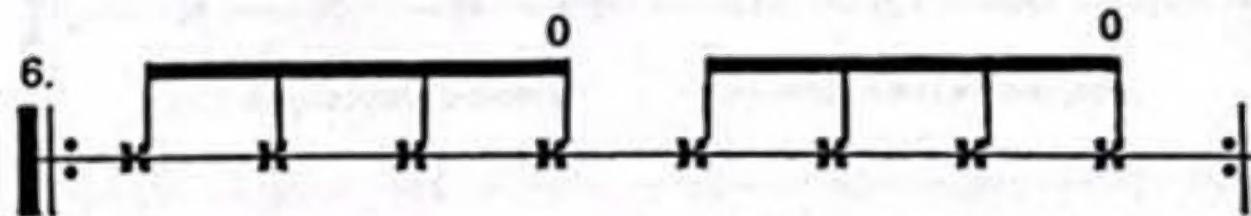
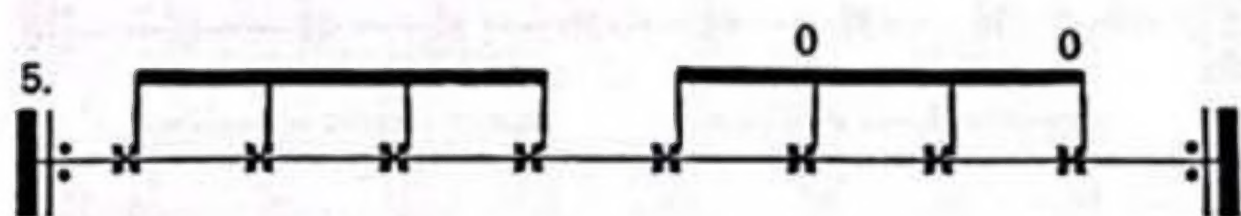
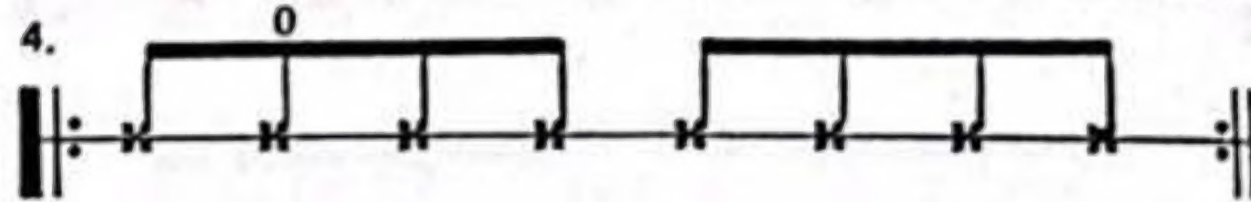
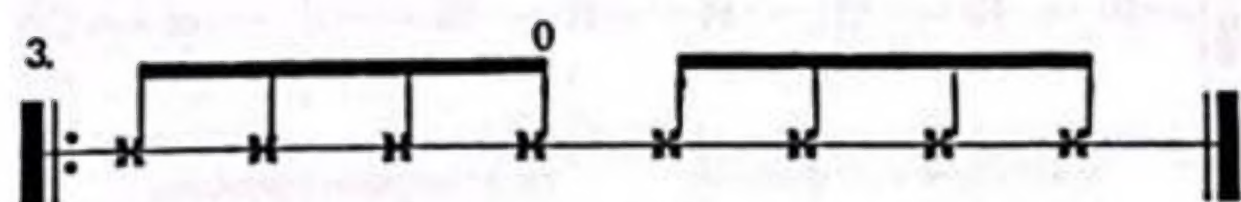
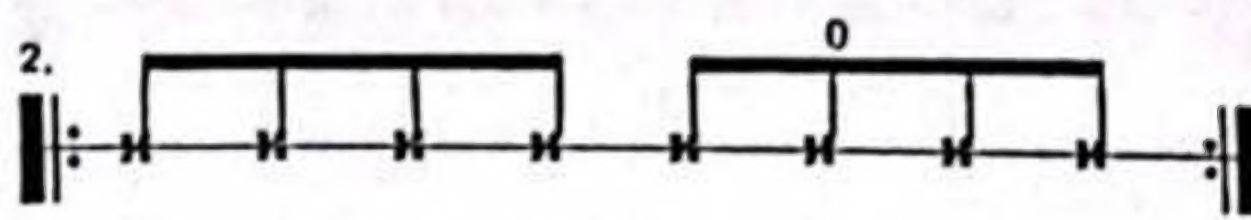
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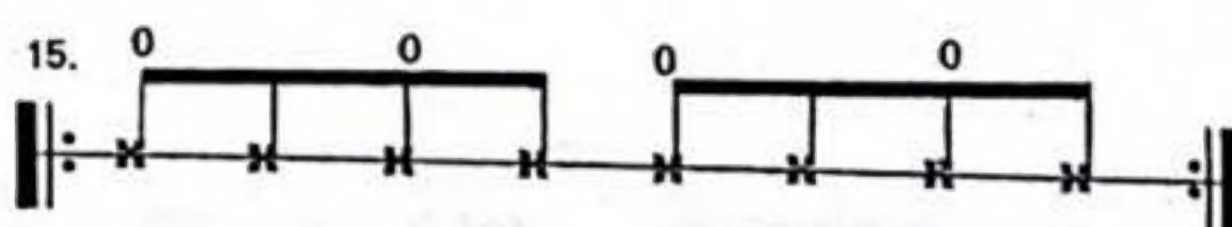
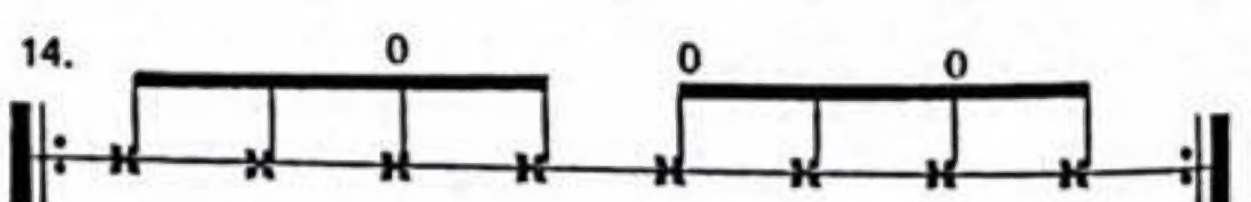
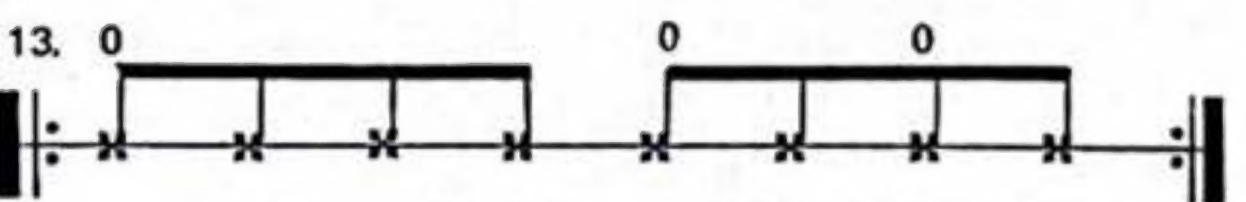
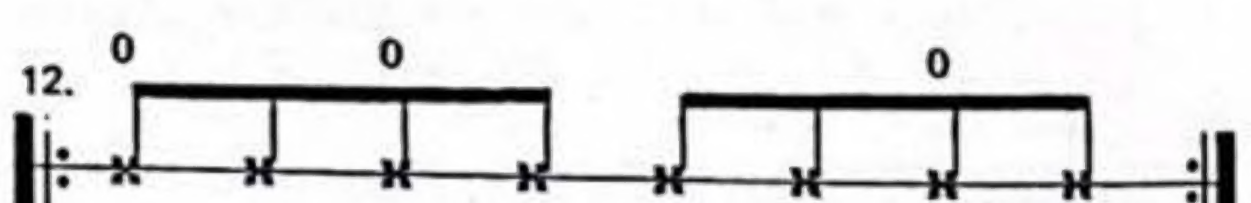
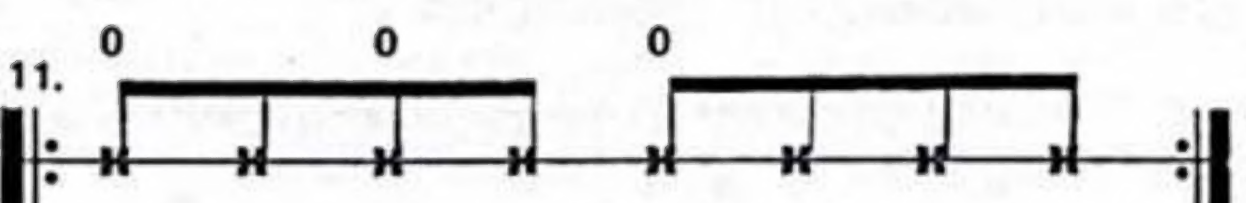
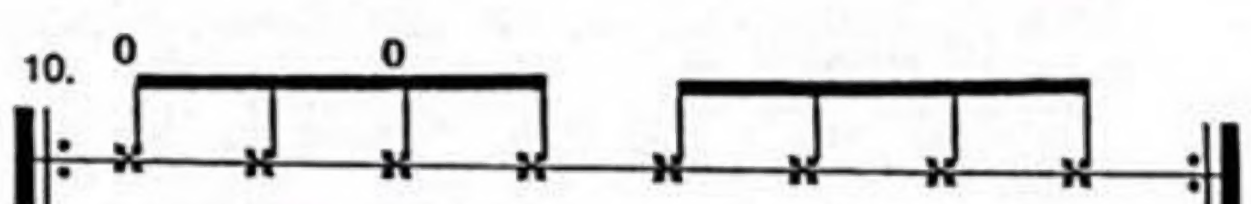
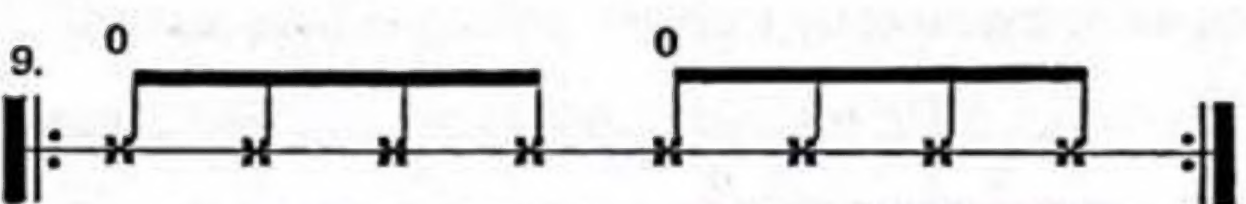
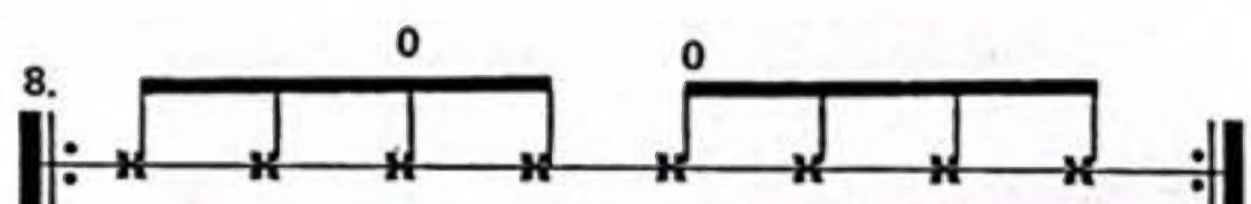
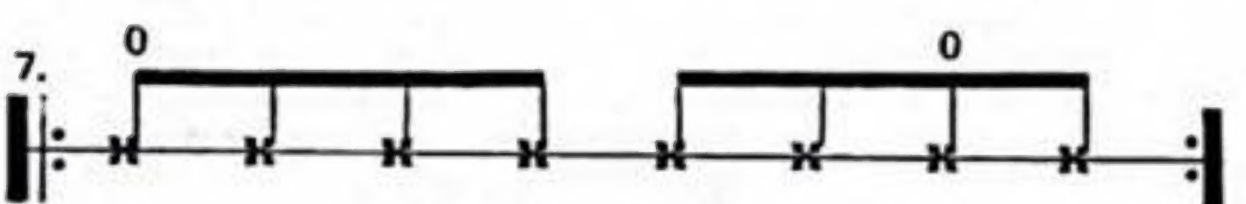
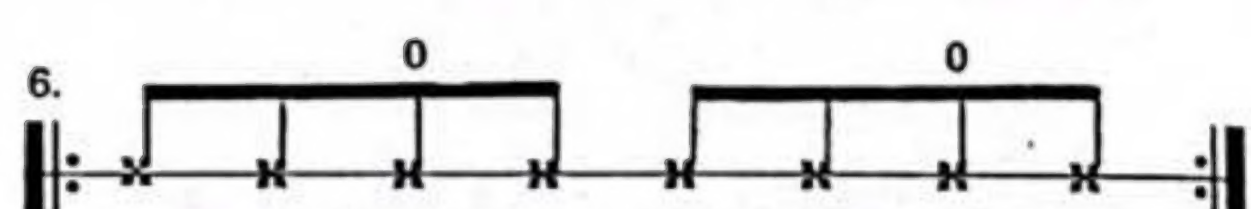
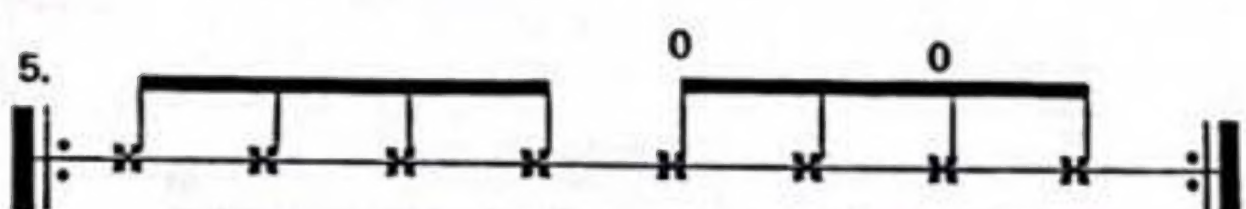
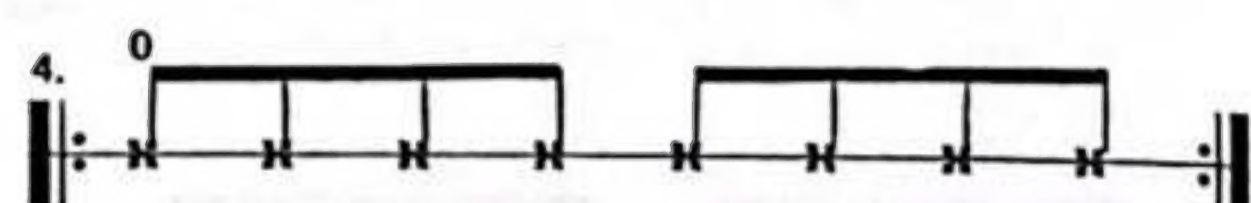
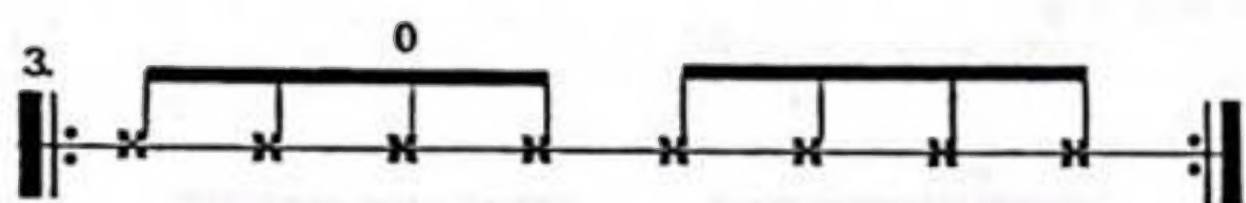
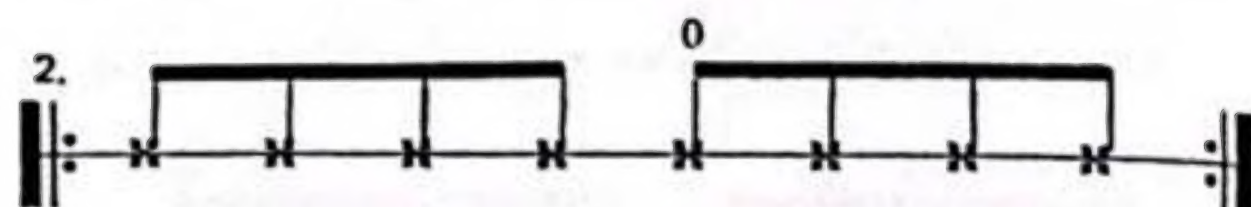
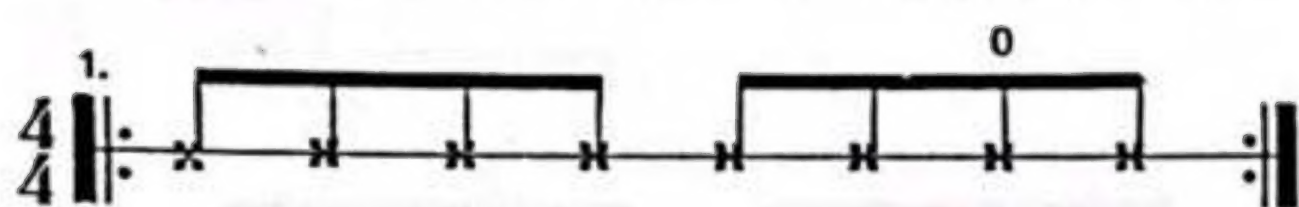
Keep your hi-hat cymbals together on all other notes.



Hi Hat



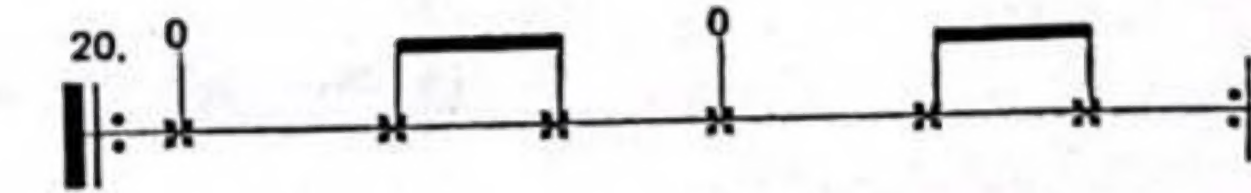
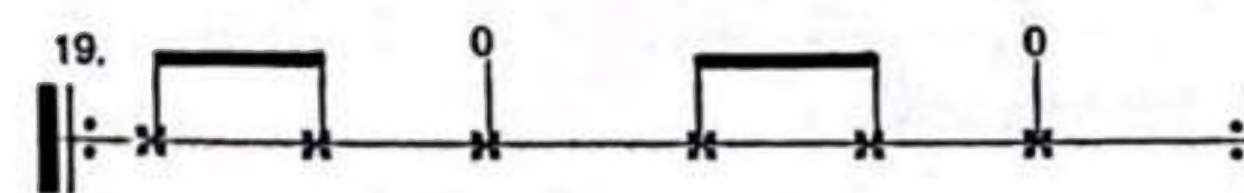
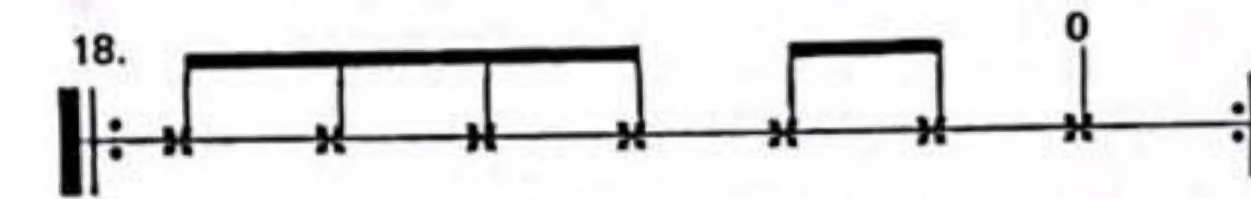
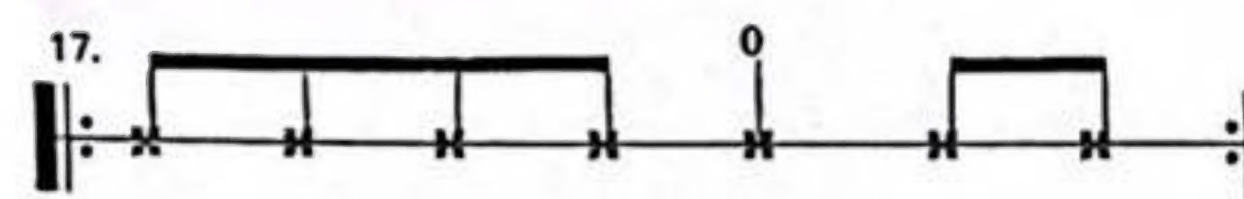
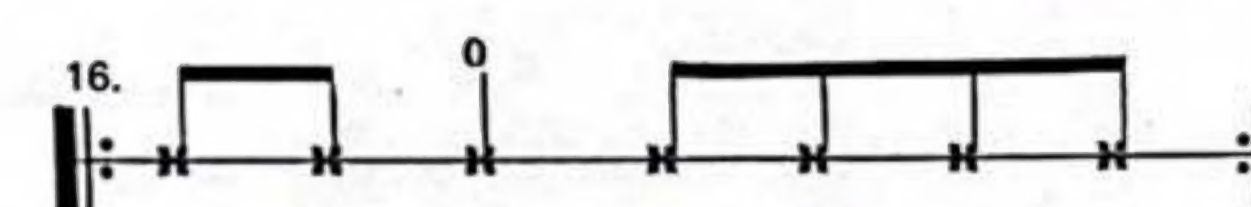
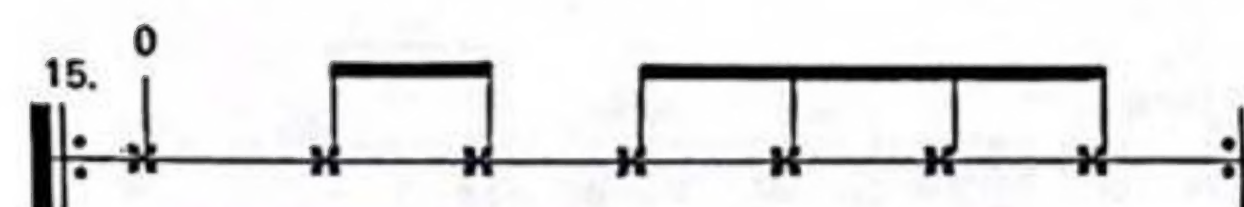
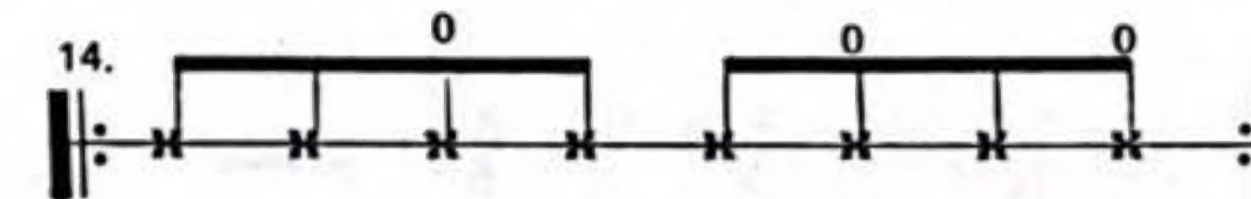
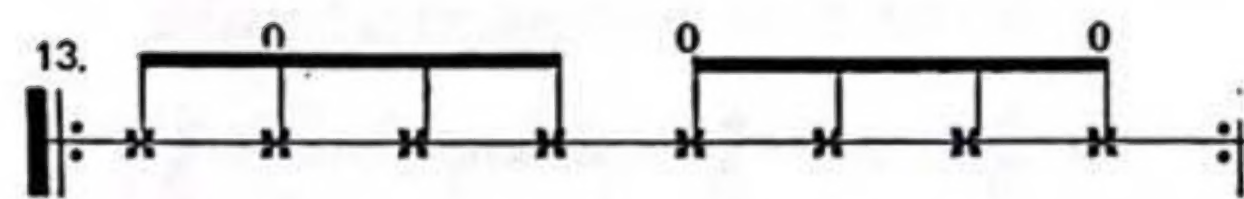
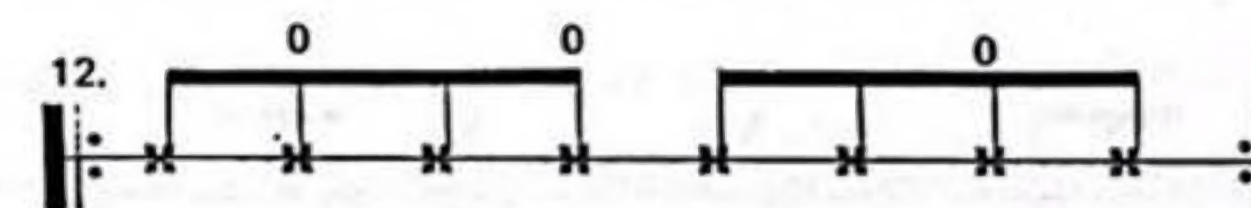
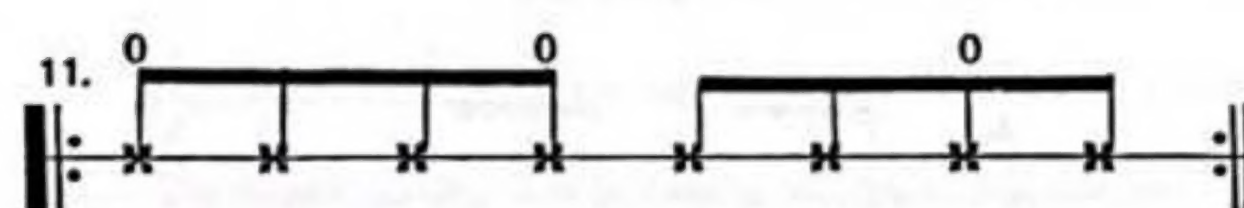
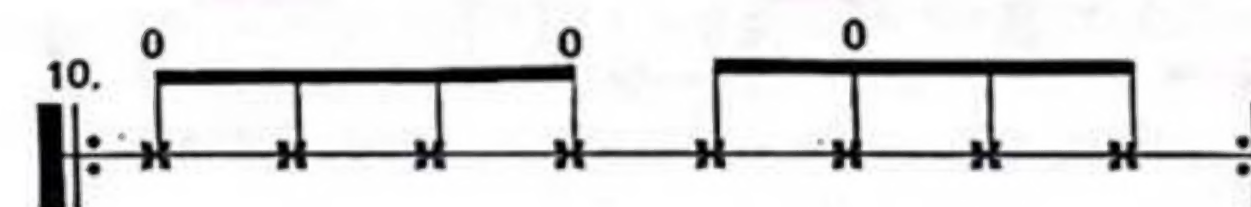
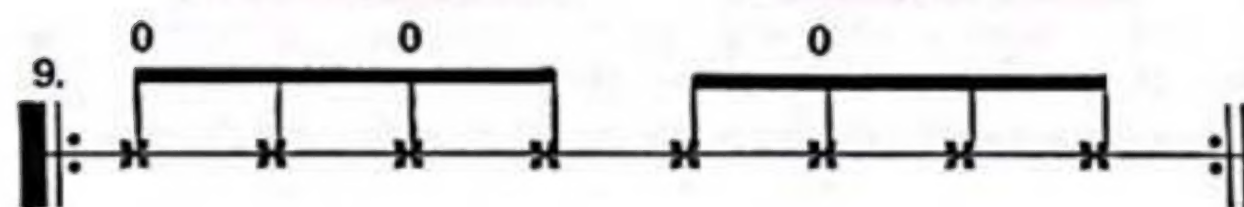
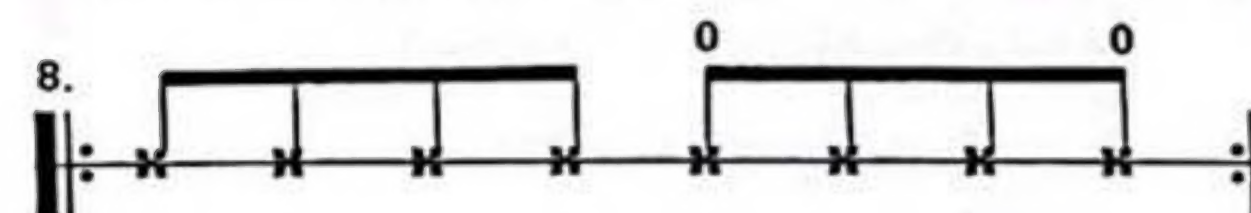
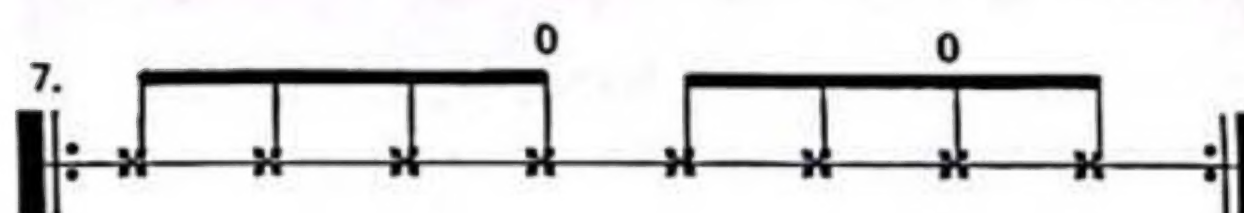
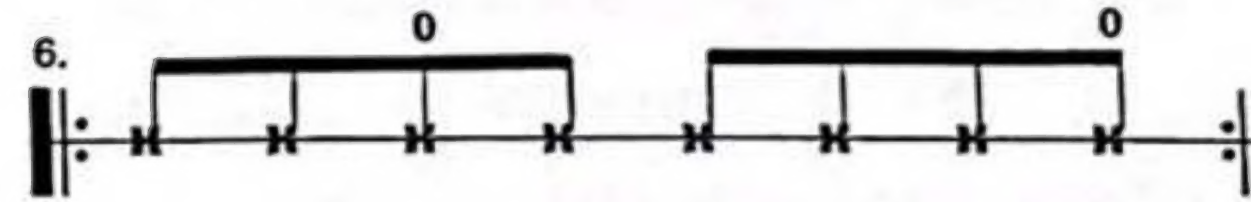
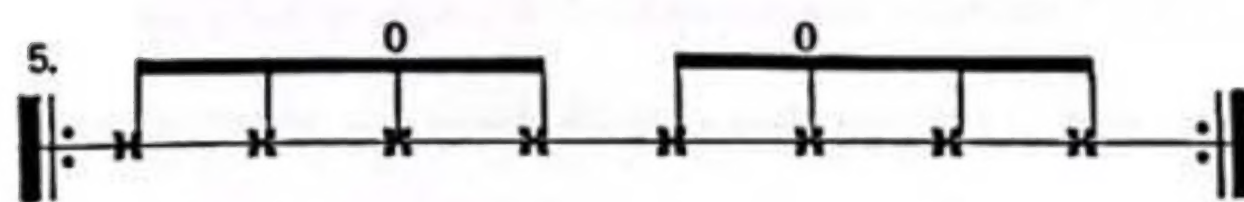
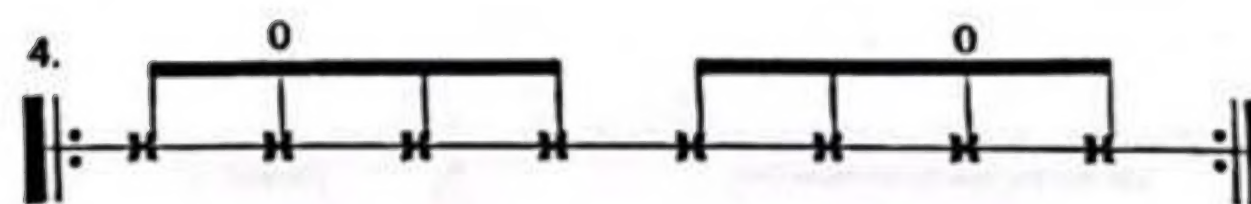
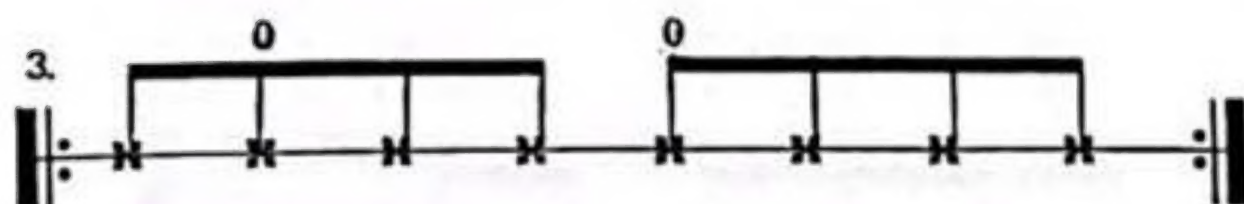
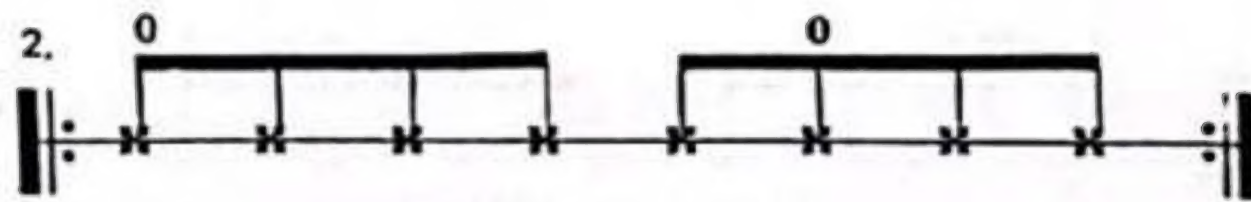
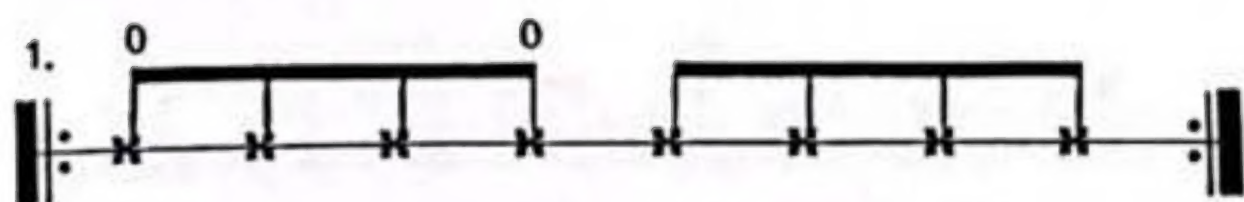
HI-HAT OPENED ON DOWNBEATS

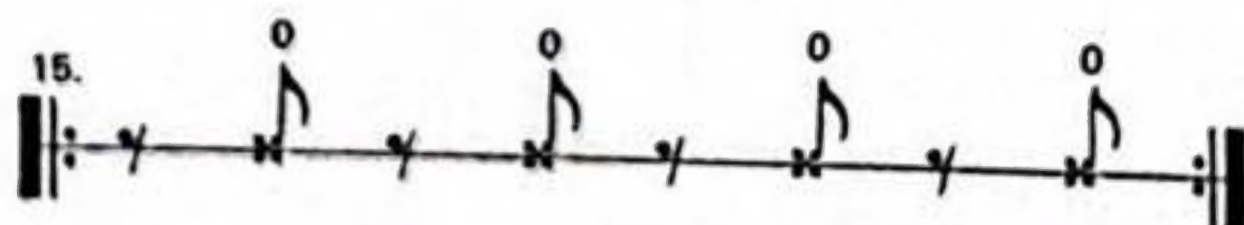
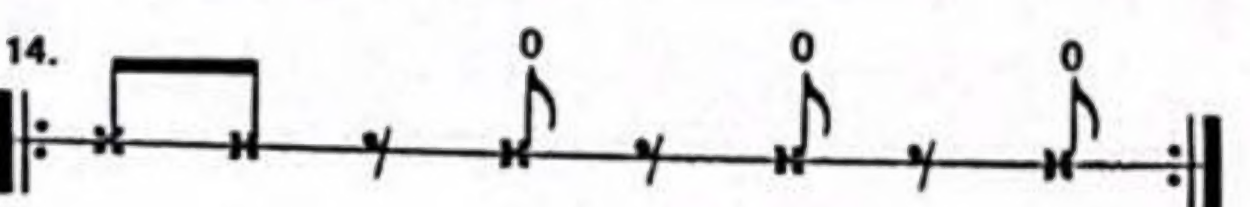
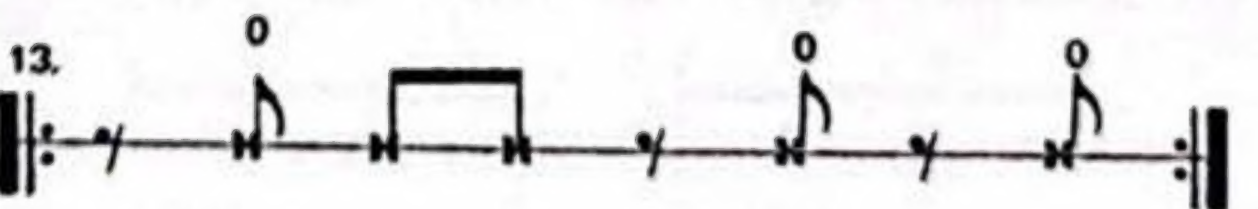
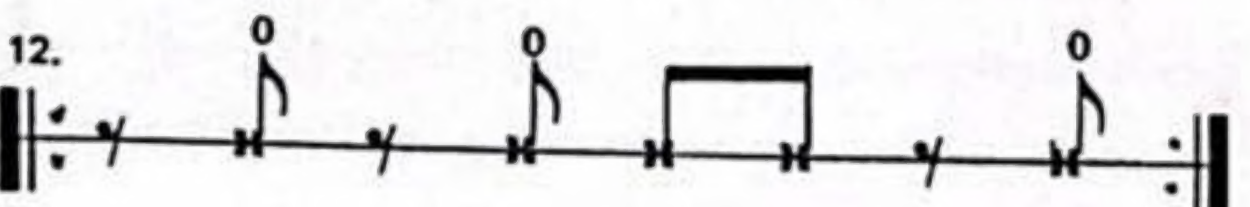
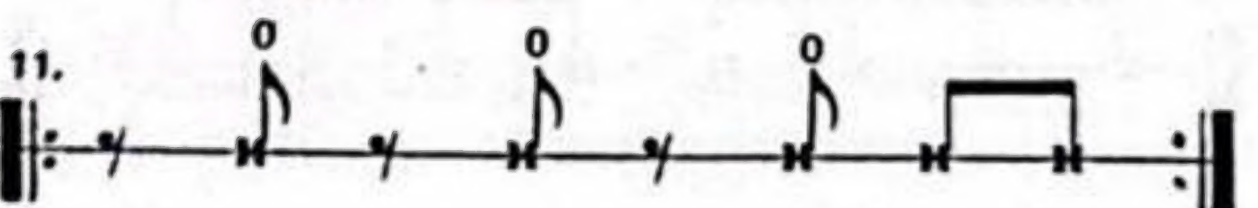
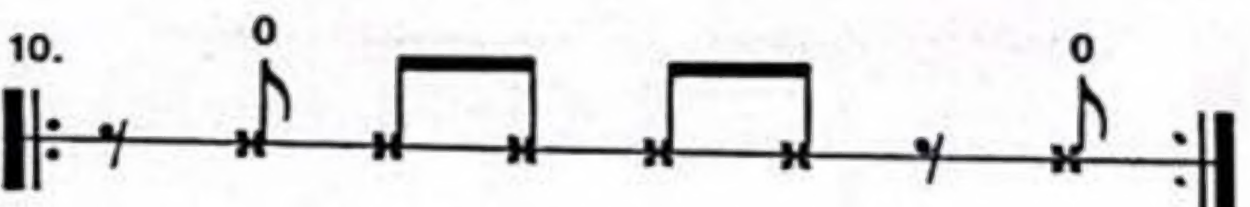
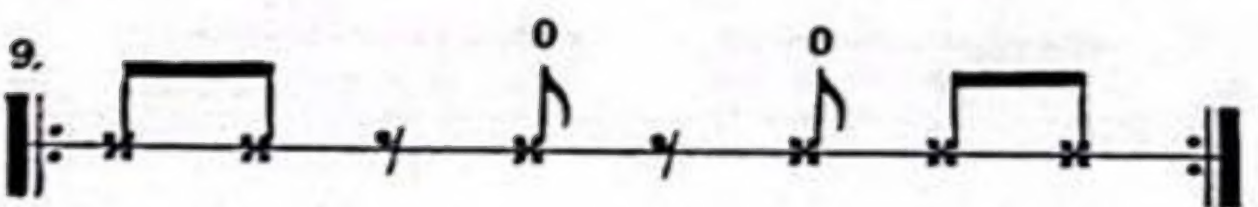
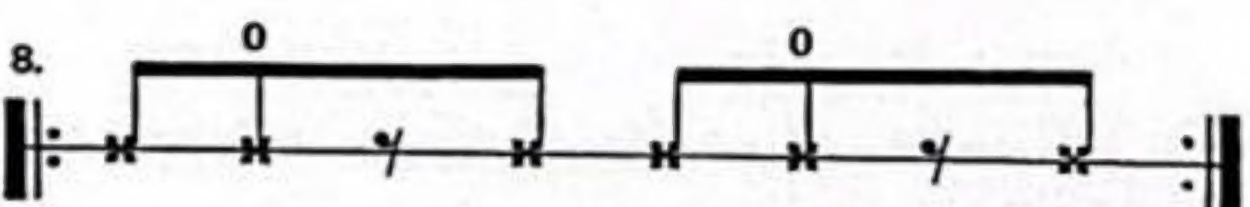
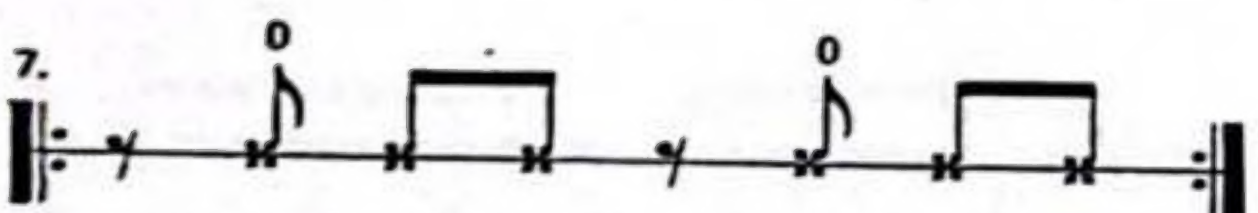
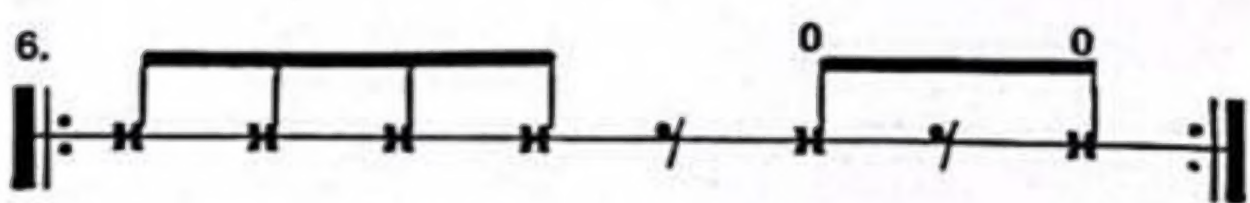
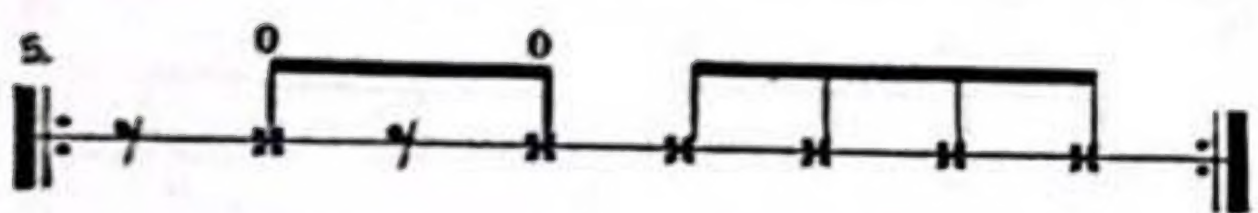
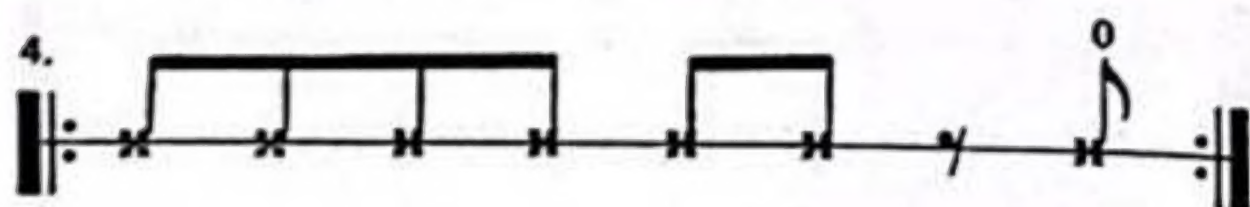
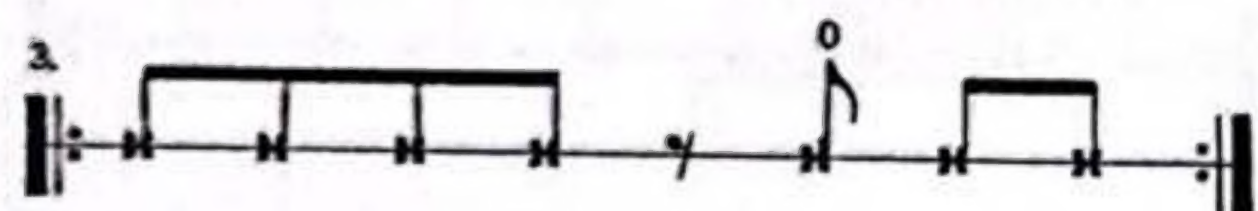
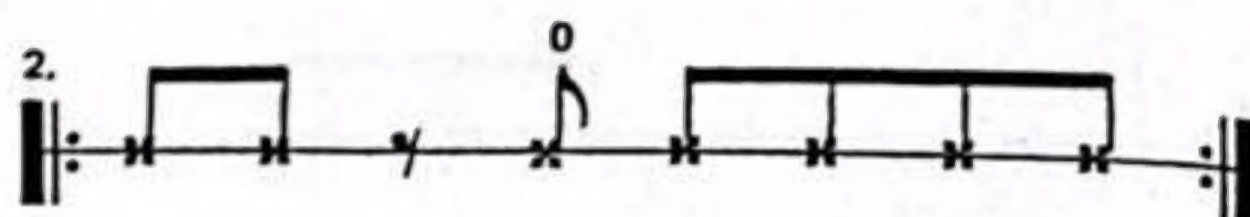
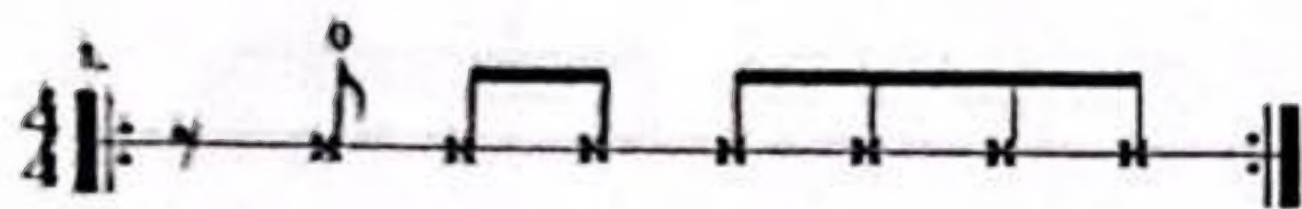


Remember: Play your bass on every beat, and your snare on 2 and 4 throughout each exercise.

HI-HAT OPENED ON UPBEATS AND DOWNBEATS

5



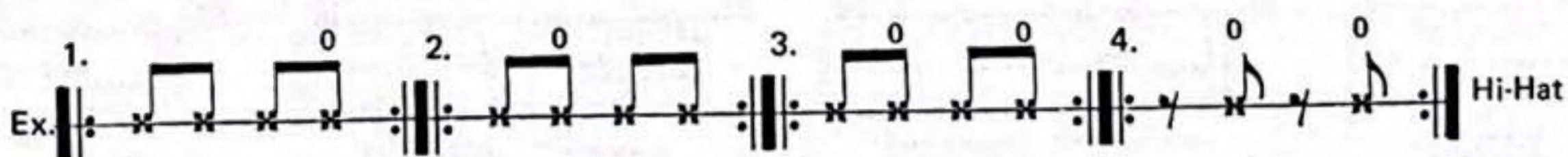
RHYTHMIC VARIATIONS WITH HI-HAT OPENED ON UPBEATS

The previous four pages presented sixty-five exercises for opening and closing the hi-hat. Although the bass and snare parts were not written out, the reader was asked to play his bass on every downbeat, while playing the snare on the counts of 2 and 4 throughout each exercise.

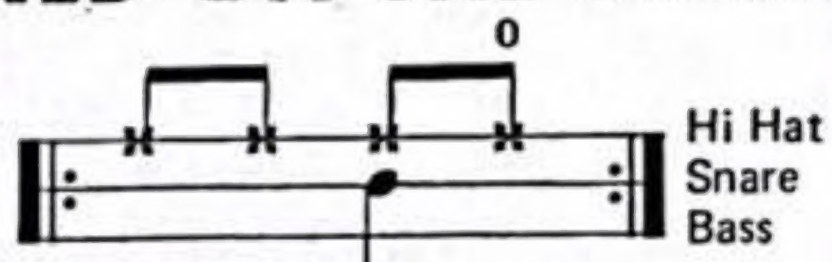
The following pages present exercises to develop coordinative facility with the bass drum, while the snare is played on the count of two. From now on, all exercises will be notated in 2/4 time instead of 4/4 time, which is the one most commonly used for playing rock music. The rationale for writing exercises in 2/4 rather than 4/4 time is based upon several factors. First, it is much easier for the reader to deal with two beats rather than four. Exercises are simpler to visualize as well as memorize, and this in turn reduces the difficulty when working out intricate coordination patterns. Moreover, the repetition of a 2/4 measure, for all practical purposes, sounds just like a measure in 4/4 time. So, even though 4/4 is the most common time signature for rock, repeating patterns in 2/4 time will give you the necessary rhythms for playing in four.

I suggest that after the reader masters all the exercises as written, he replay them in different combinations. For instance, combine exercise one with number three, or five, or nine. This will create patterns in 4/4 time, and give the reader an opportunity to develop his own ear by selecting combinations which sound particularly good to him.

Although sixty-five possibilities for opening and closing the hi-hat were presented on the previous pages, the following pages will demonstrate bass drum variations in relation to only four of the sixty-five possibilities. I have chosen what I consider to be the most common and practical hi-hat patterns so that the reader can avoid practicing extraneous material. The following hi-hat patterns are the ones that will be used in this section. Notice they are in 2/4 time. By simply repeating them it sounds as though you are playing the standard disco beats in 4/4 time.



HI-HAT OPENED ON THE UPBEAT OF TWO



BASS DRUM VARIATIONS

32 variations of bass drum patterns, numbered 1 through 32, arranged in an 8x4 grid. Each variation shows a different rhythmic pattern for the bass drum, while the Hi Hat and Snare lines remain consistent with the first measure. The patterns are variations on the basic 4/4 beat, often using eighth and sixteenth notes.

1. 2. 3. 4.

5. 6. 7. 8.

9. 10. 11. 12.

13. 14. 15. 16.

17. 18. 19. 20.

21. 22. 23. 24.

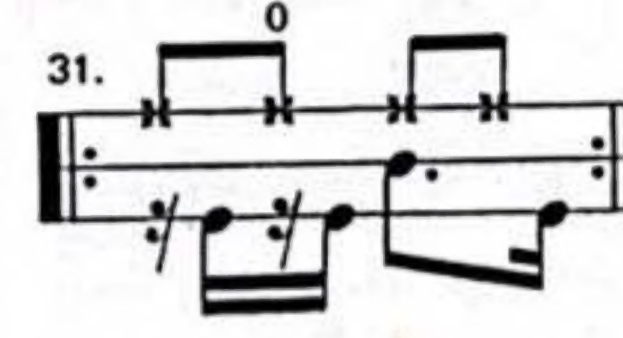
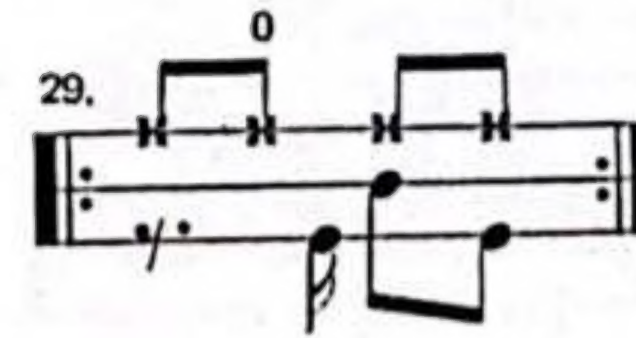
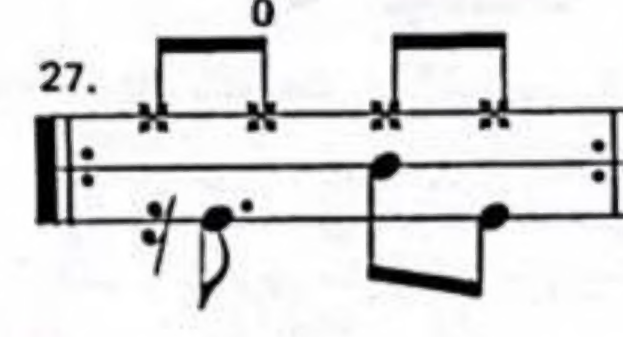
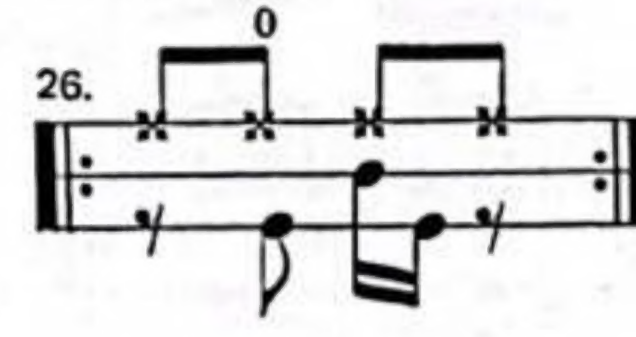
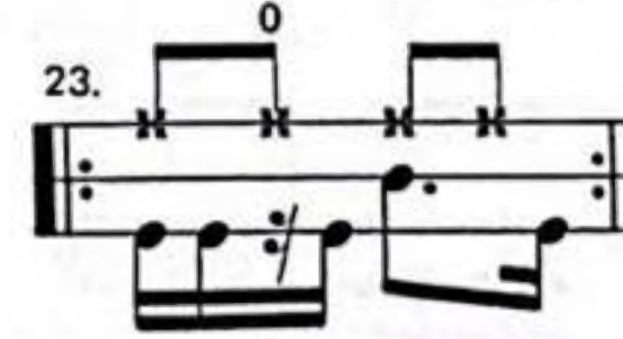
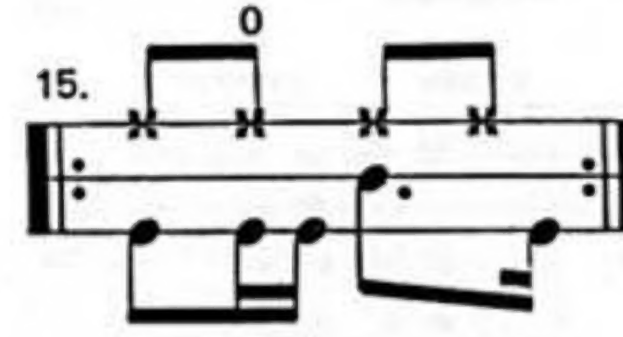
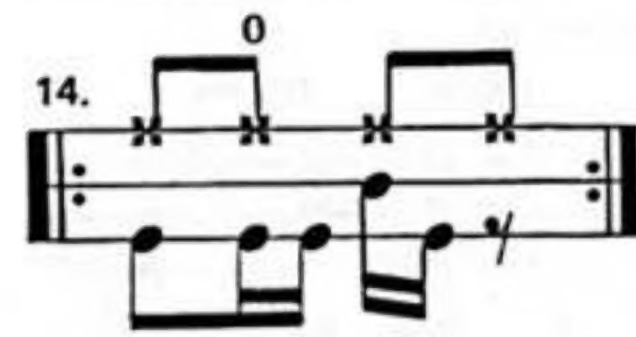
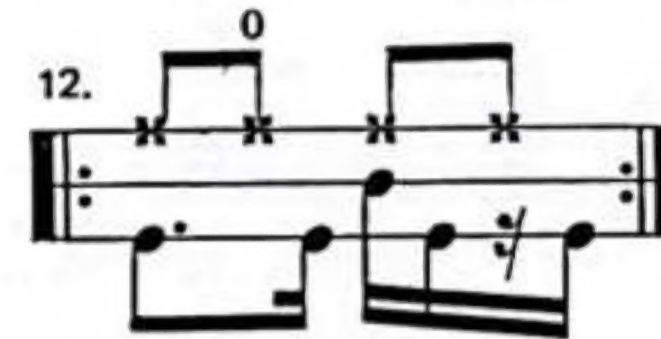
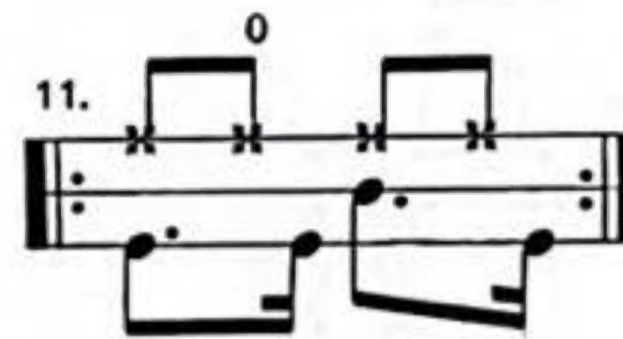
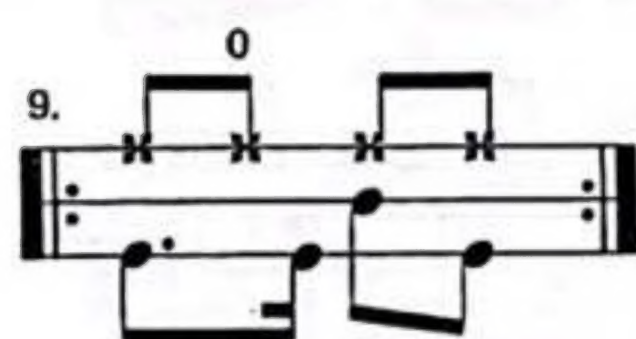
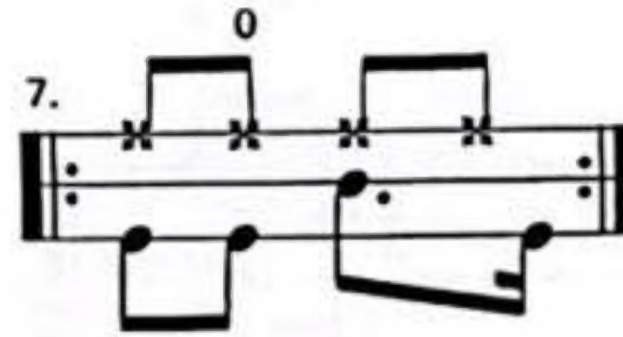
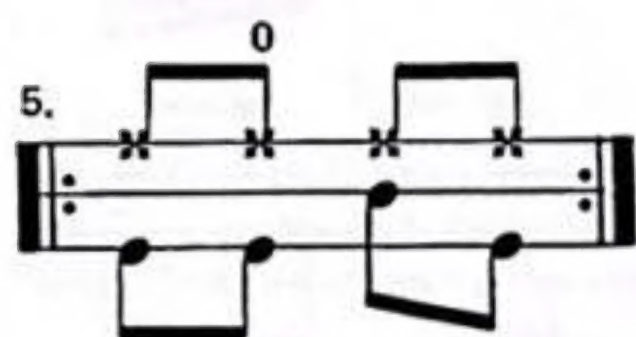
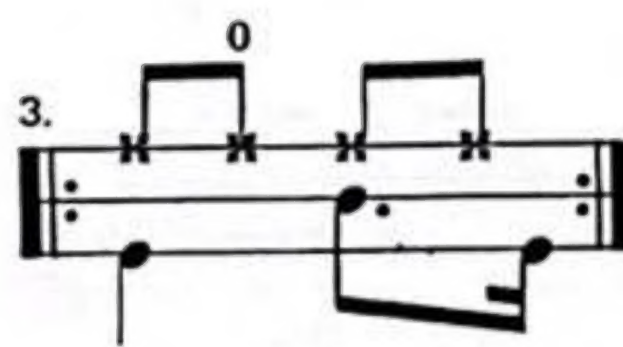
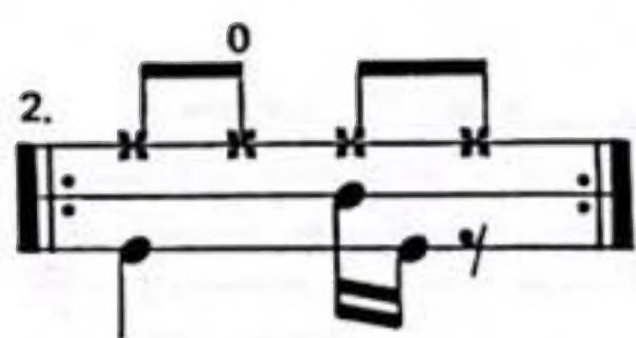
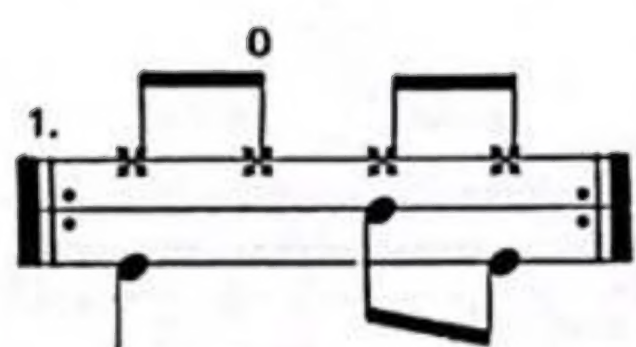
25. 26. 27. 28.

29. 30. 31. 32.

HI-HAT OPENED ON THE UPBEAT OF ONE



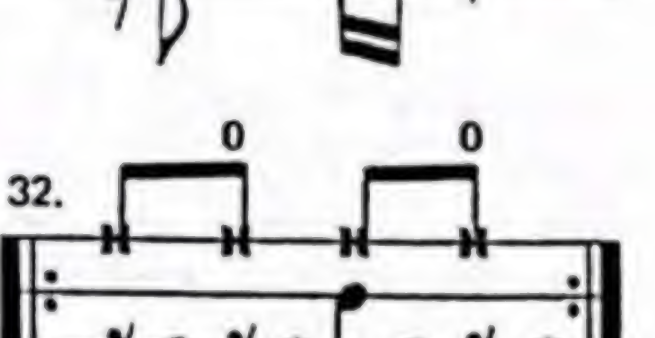
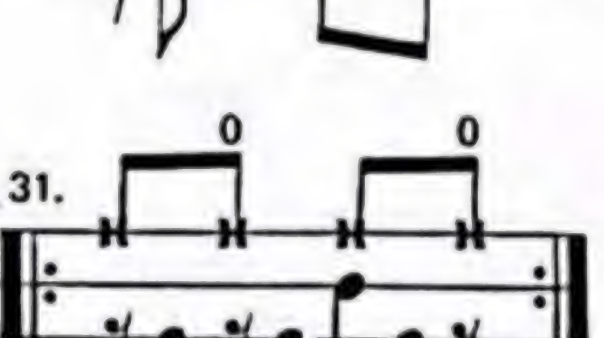
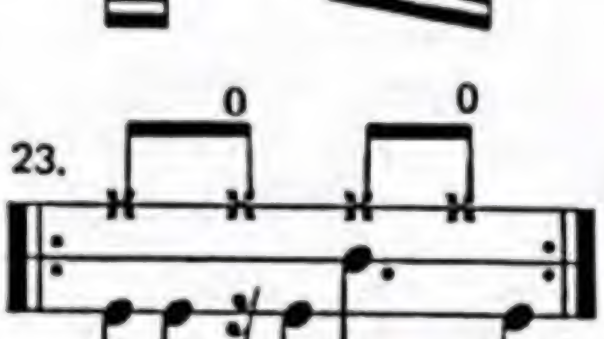
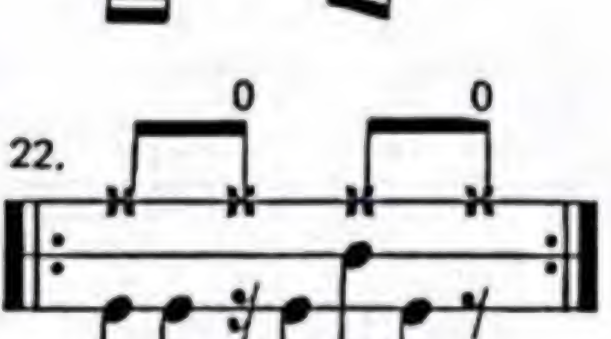
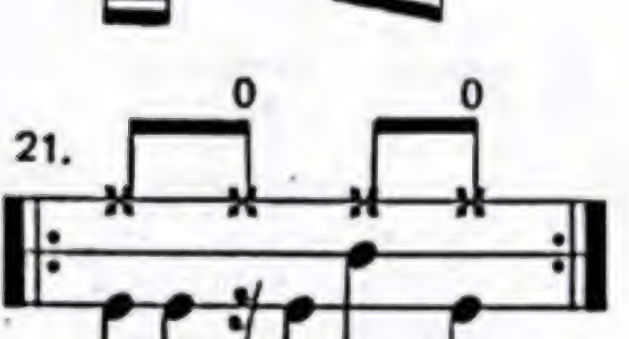
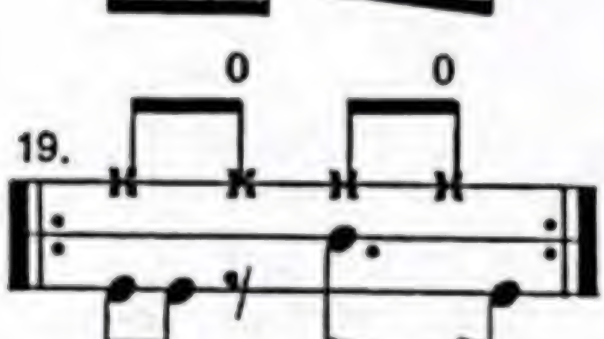
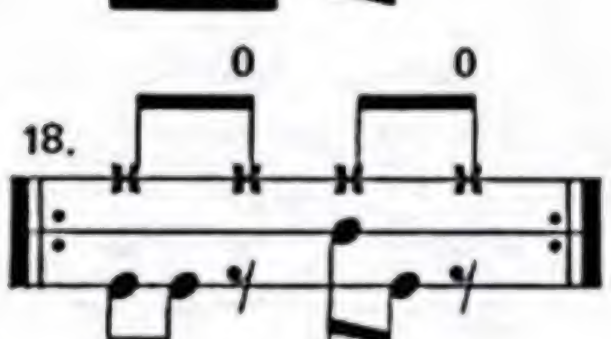
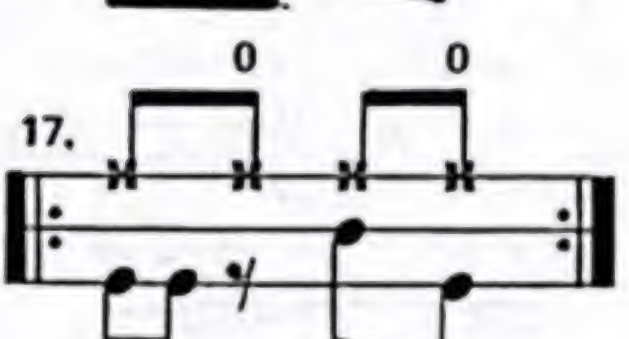
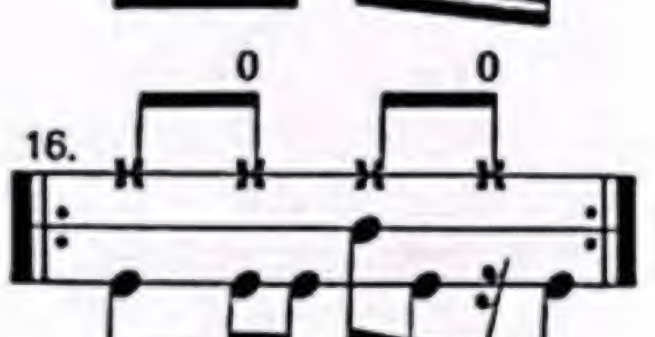
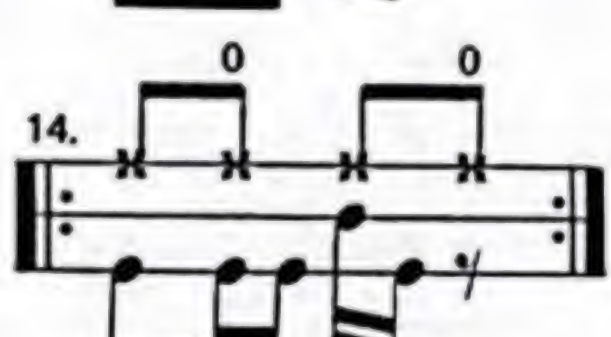
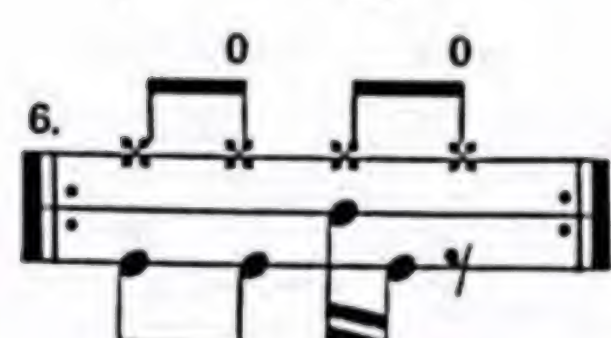
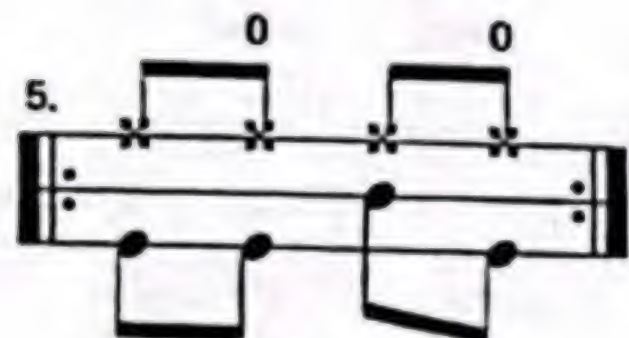
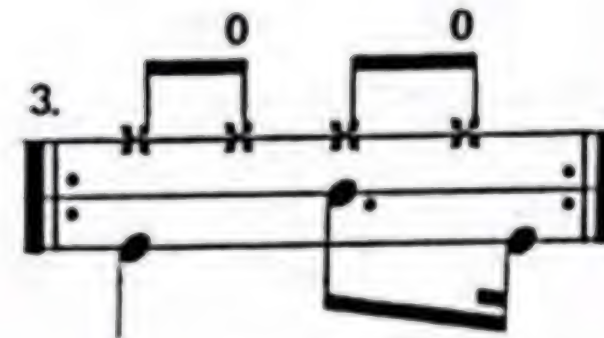
BASS DRUM VARIATIONS



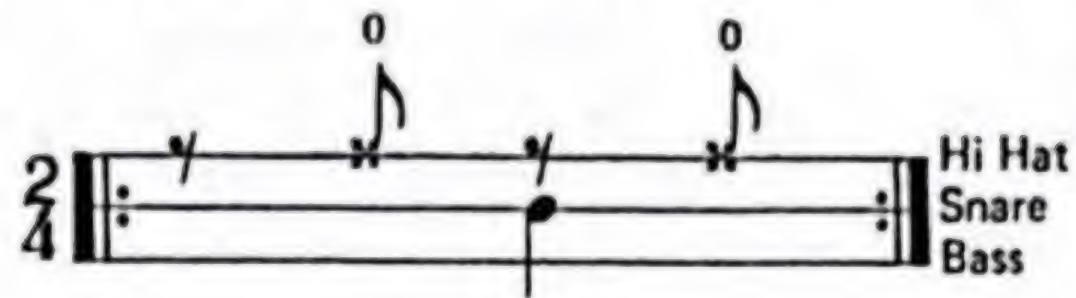
HI-HAT OPENED ON THE UPBEATS OF ONE AND TWO



BASS DRUM VARIATIONS



COMMON HI-HAT PATTERN PLAYED ONLY ON OFFBEATS



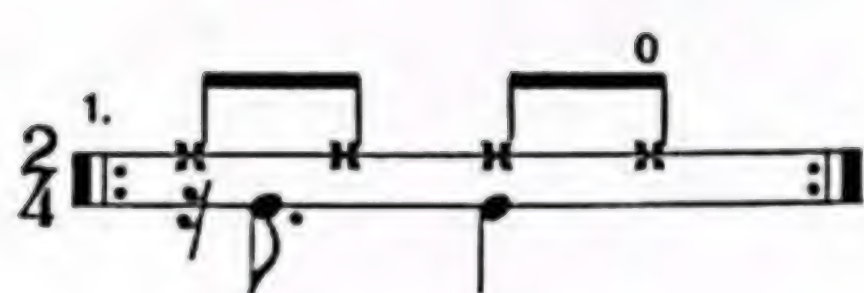
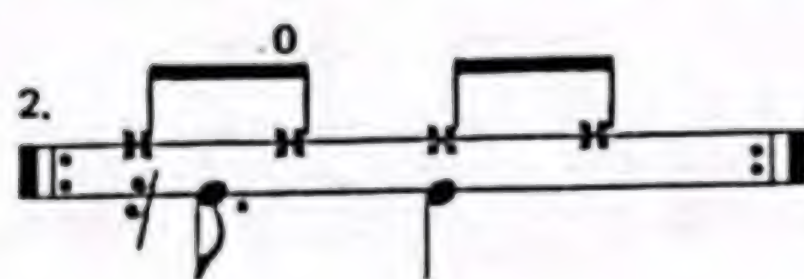
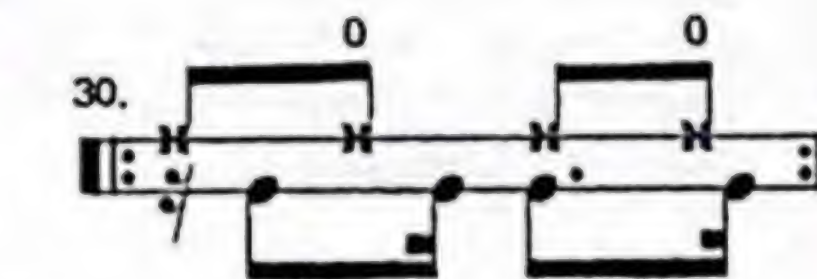
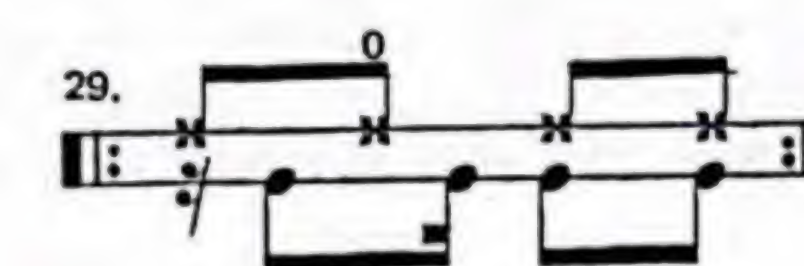
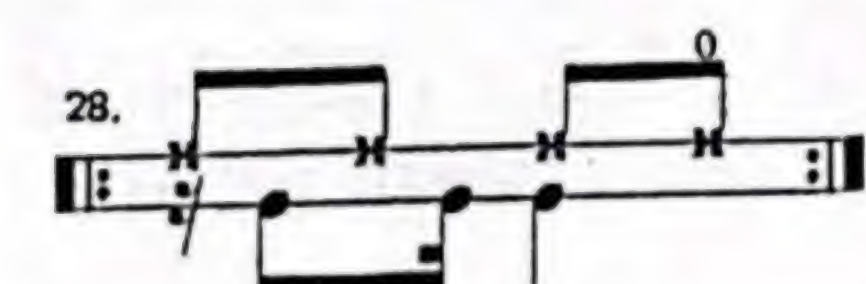
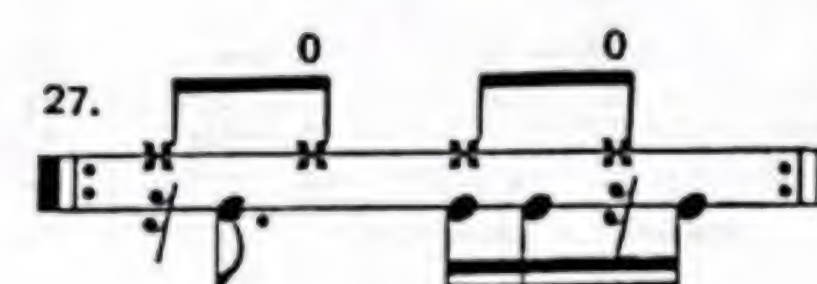
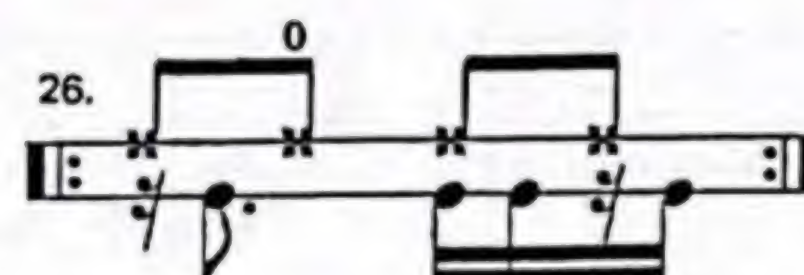
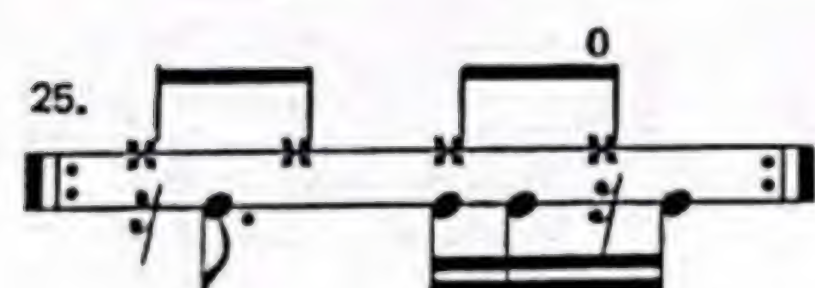
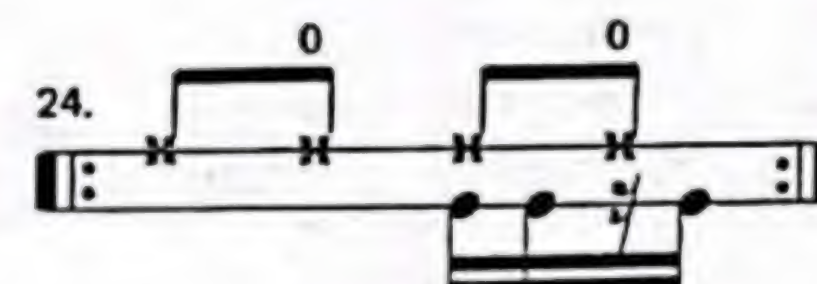
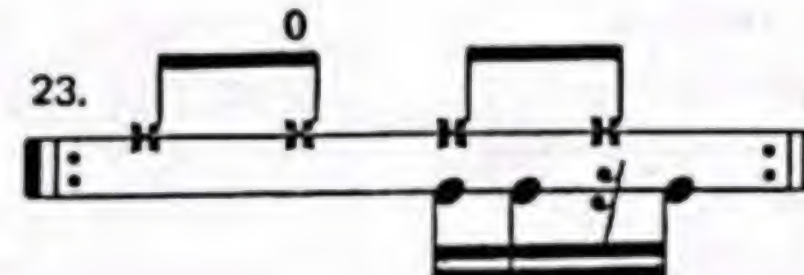
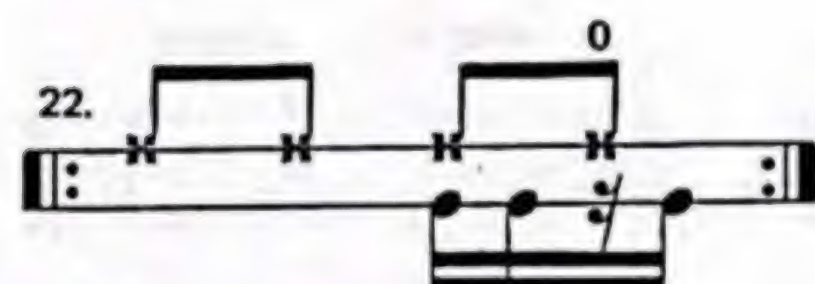
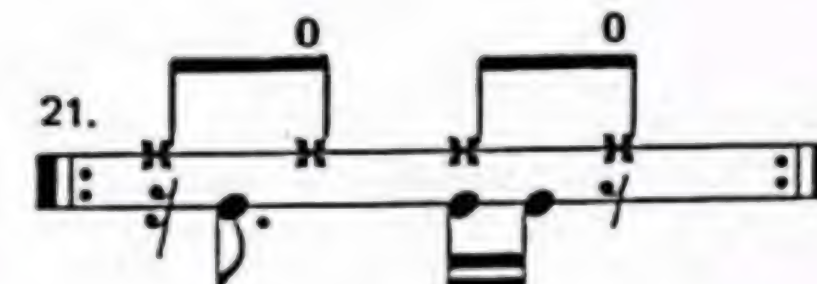
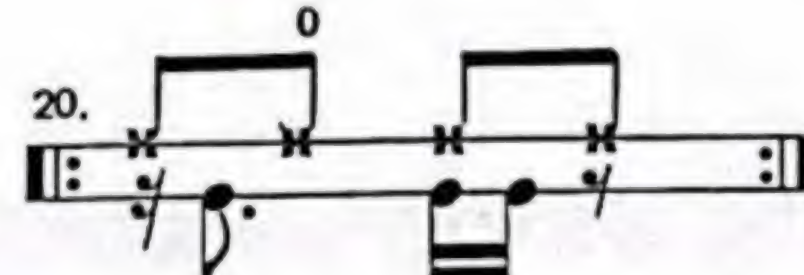
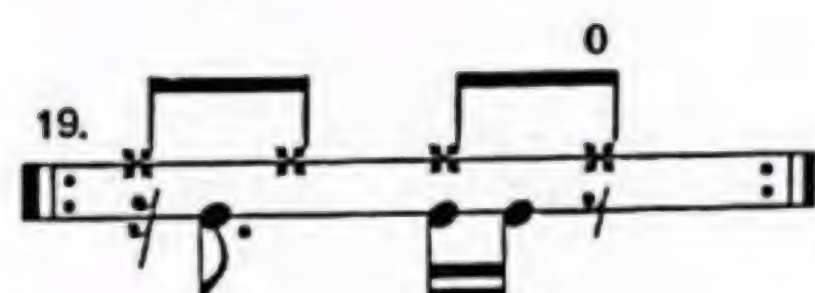
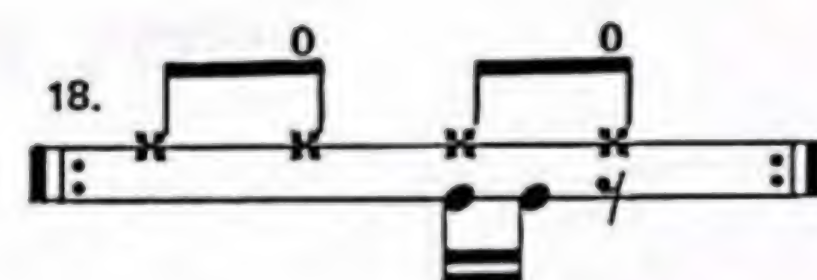
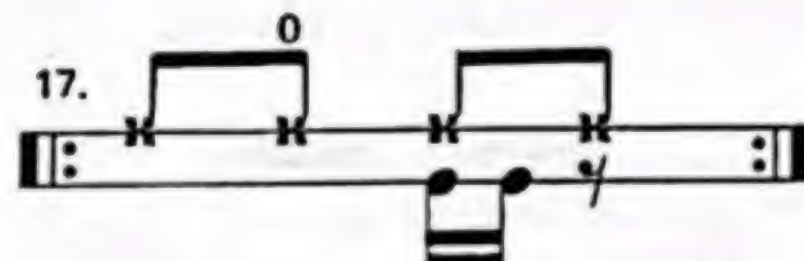
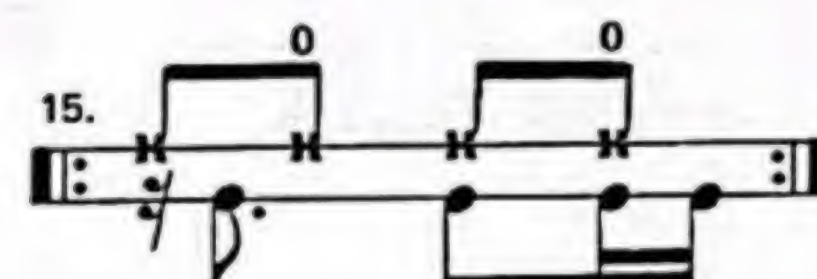
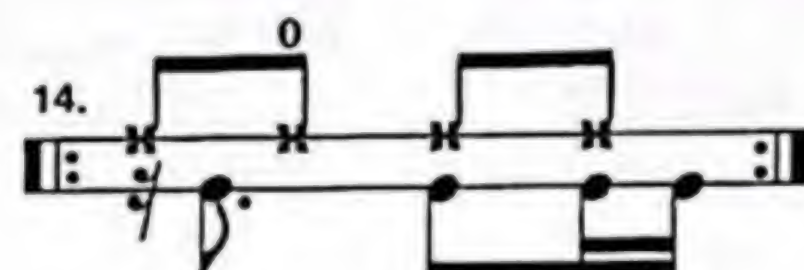
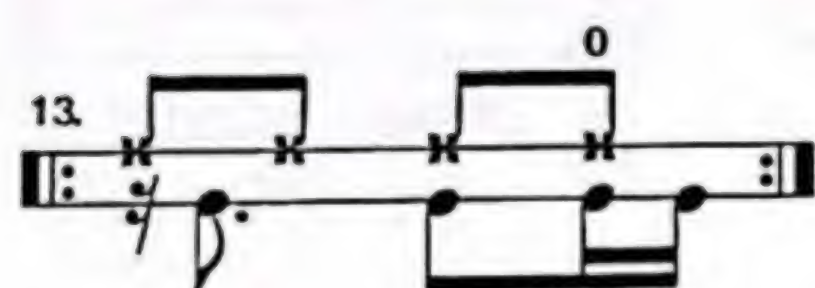
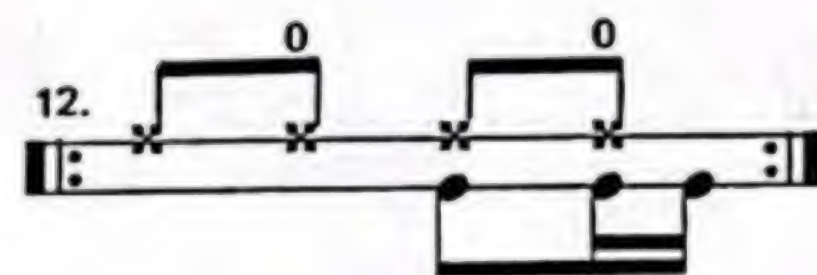
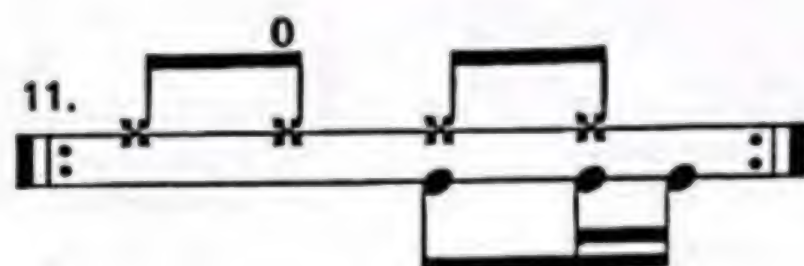
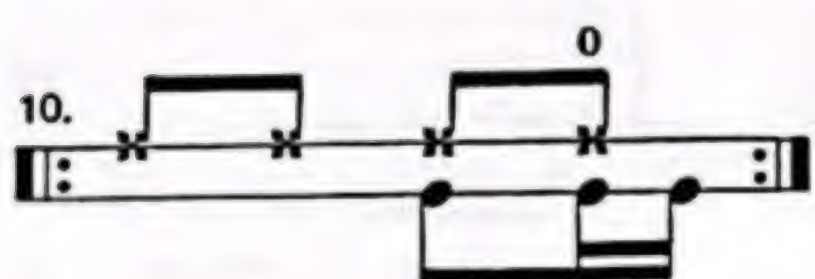
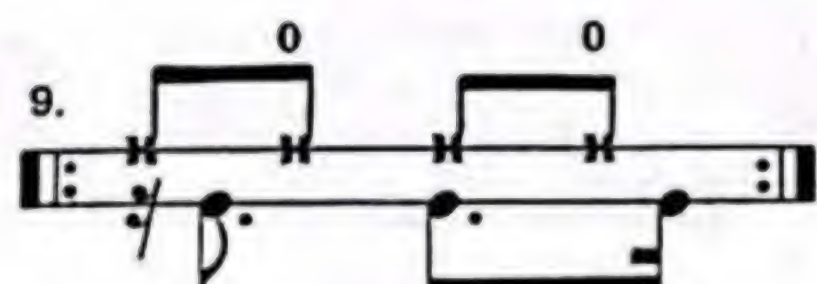
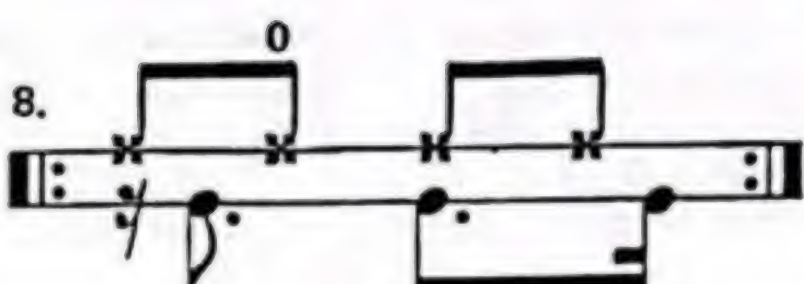
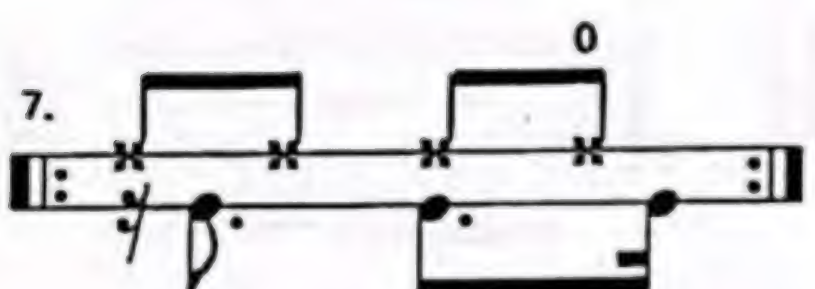
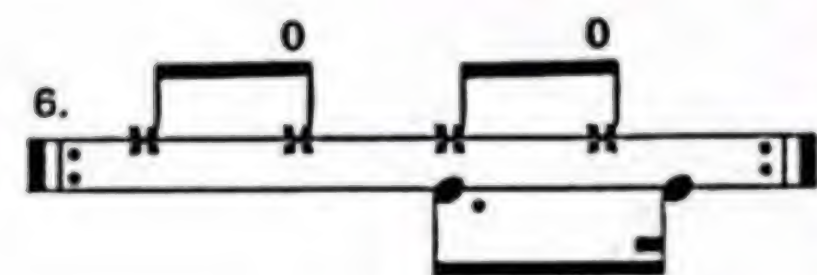
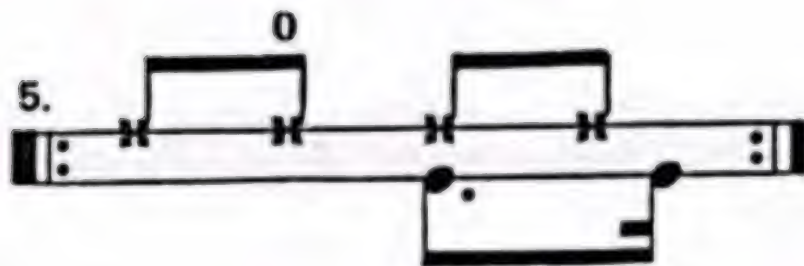
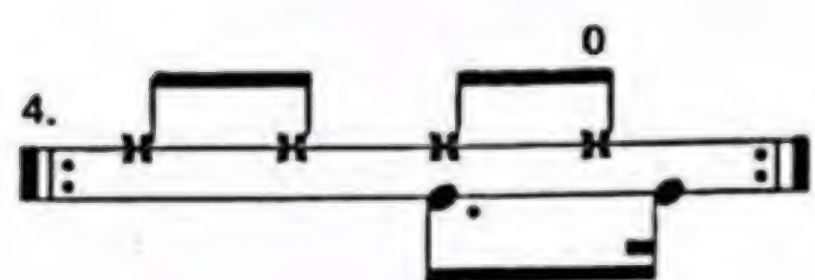
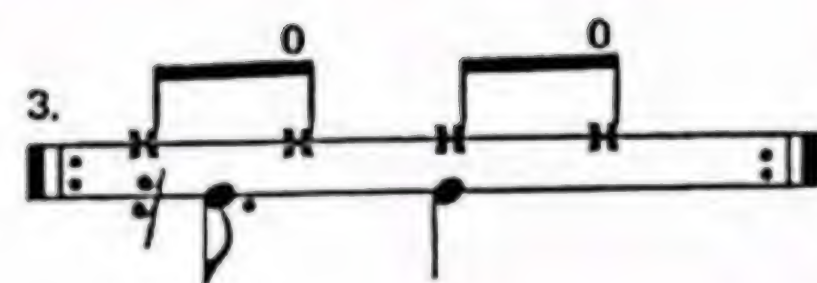
BASS DRUM VARIATIONS



SNARE DRUM VARIATIONS

Until now, the snare has been played only on the count of two. The next page will demonstrate thirty variations for playing the snare drum. The subsequent six pages will show an extensive array of bass drum patterns weaved around selected snare drum variations.

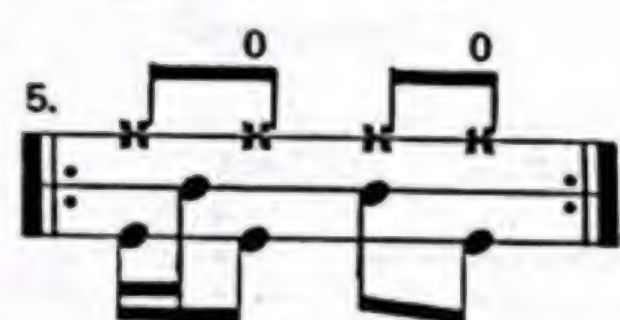
VARIATIONS FOR SNARE DRUM

Hi Hat
SnareHi Hat
Snare

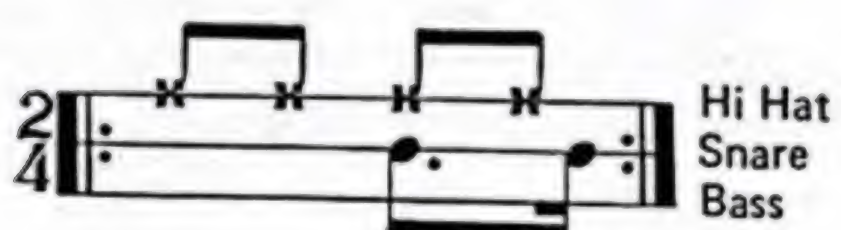
SNARE DRUM PATTERN NUMBER ONE



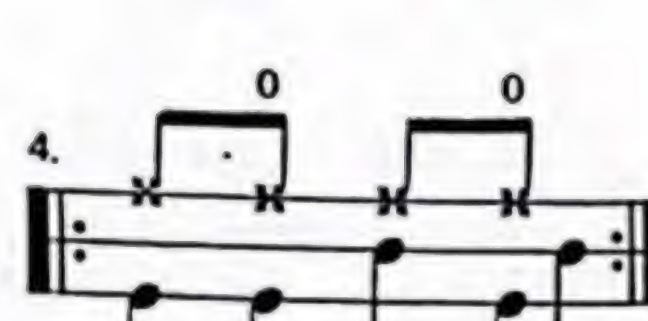
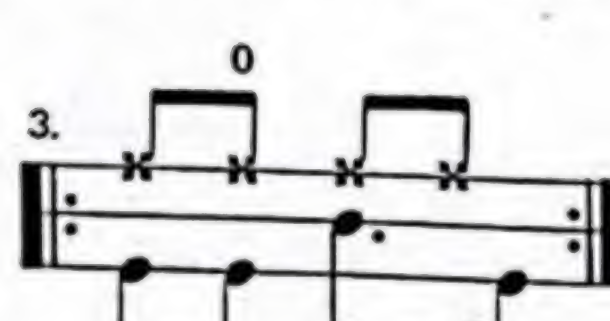
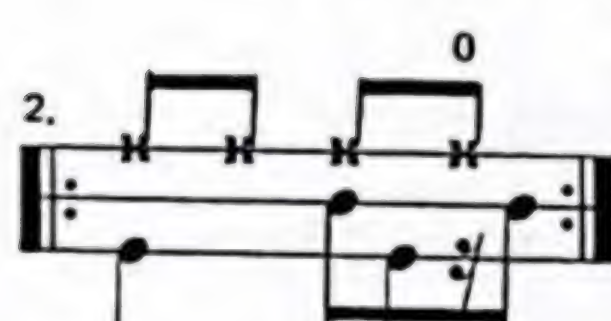
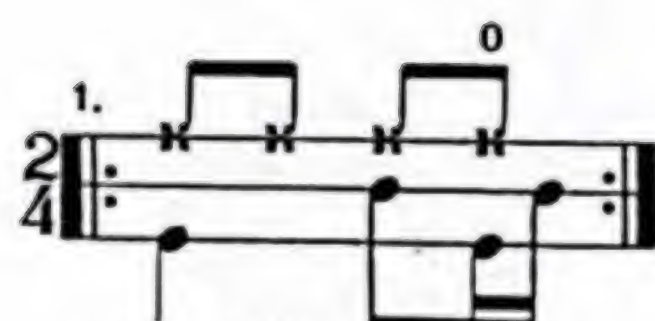
BASS DRUM VARIATIONS



SNARE DRUM PATTERN TWO



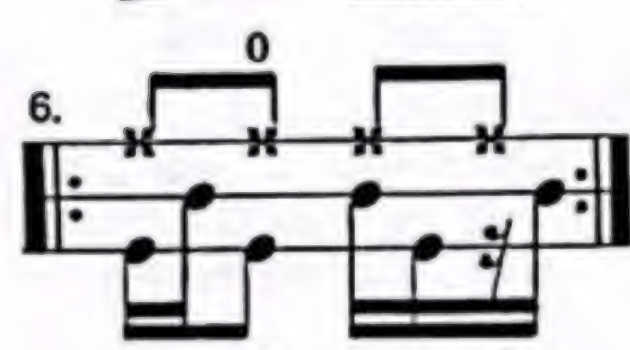
BASS DRUM VARIATIONS



SNARE DRUM PATTERN NUMBER THREE



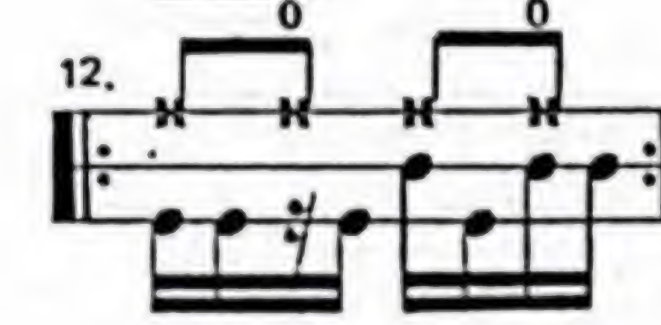
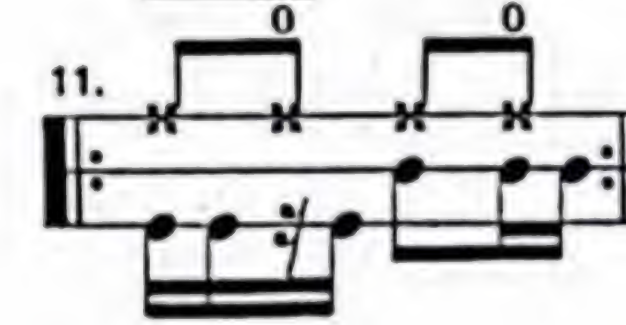
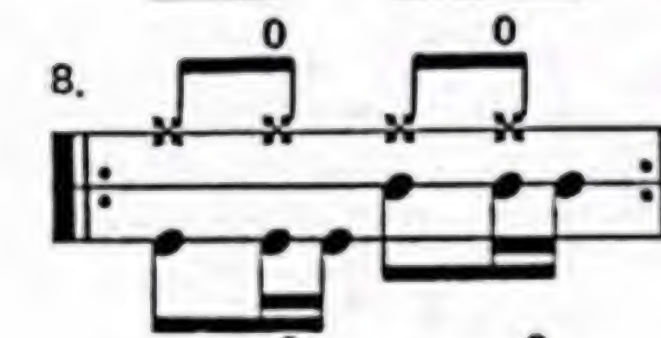
BASS DRUM VARIATIONS



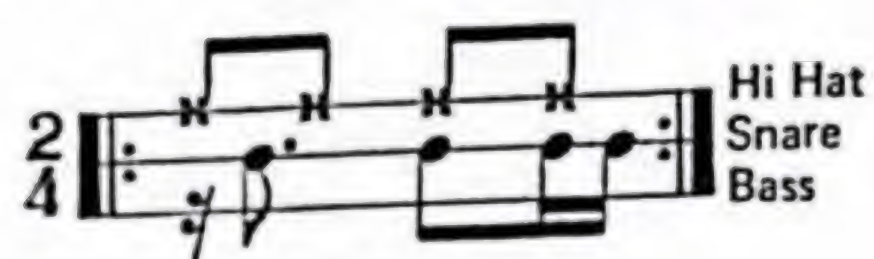
SNARE DRUM PATTERN NUMBER FOUR



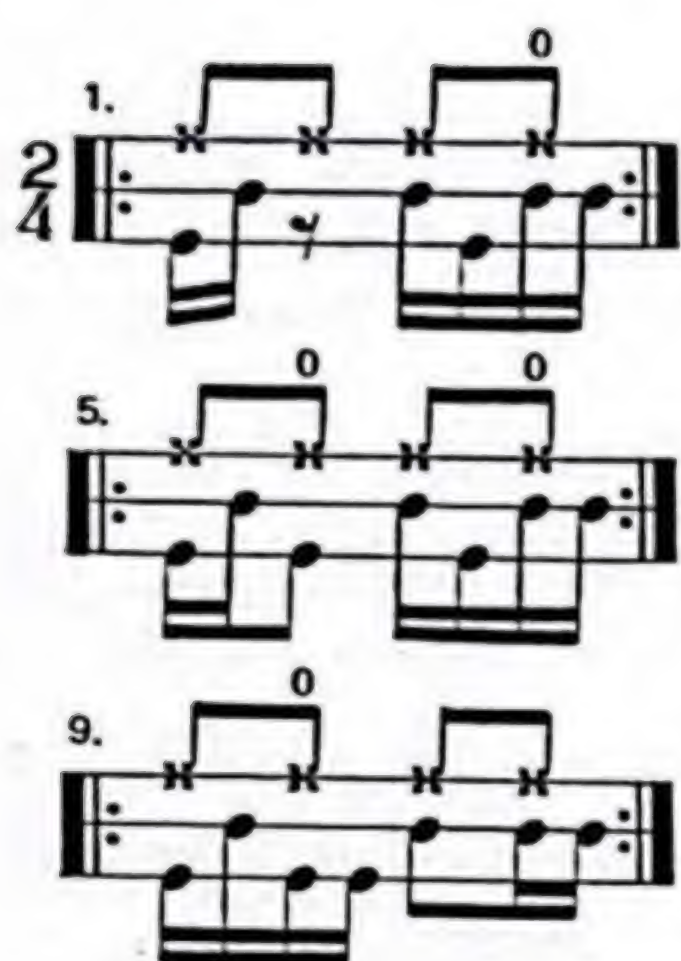
BASS DRUM VARIATIONS



SNARE DRUM PATTERN NUMBER FIVE



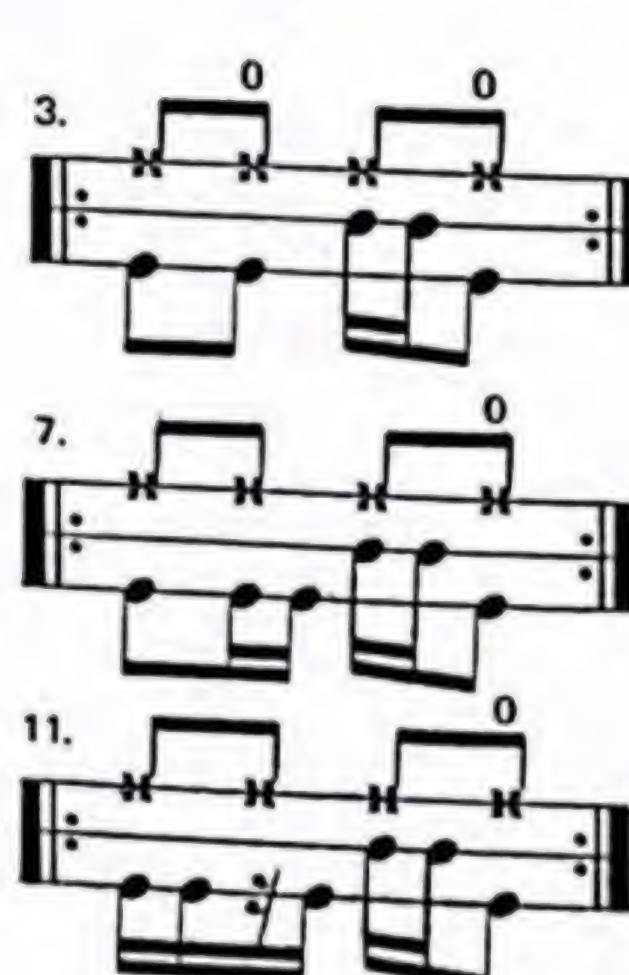
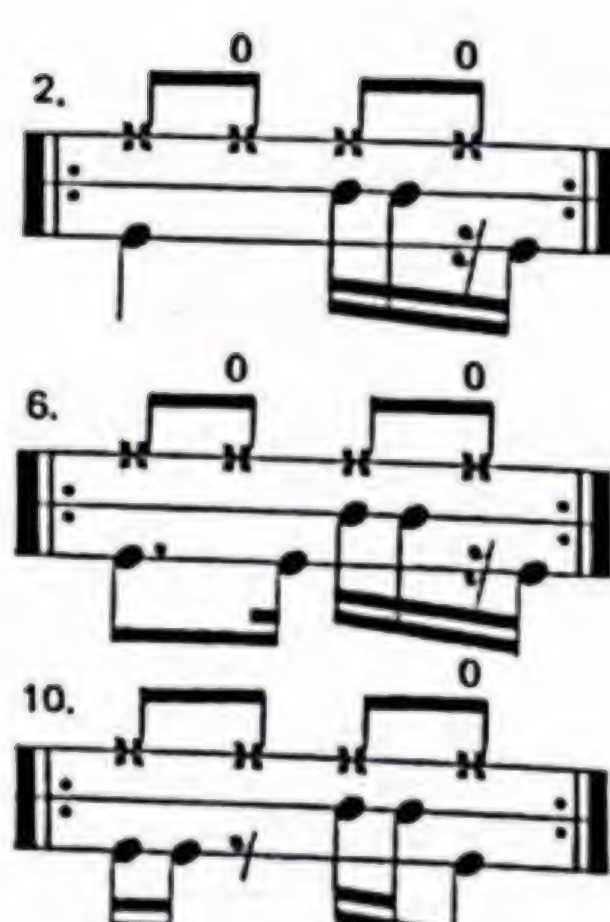
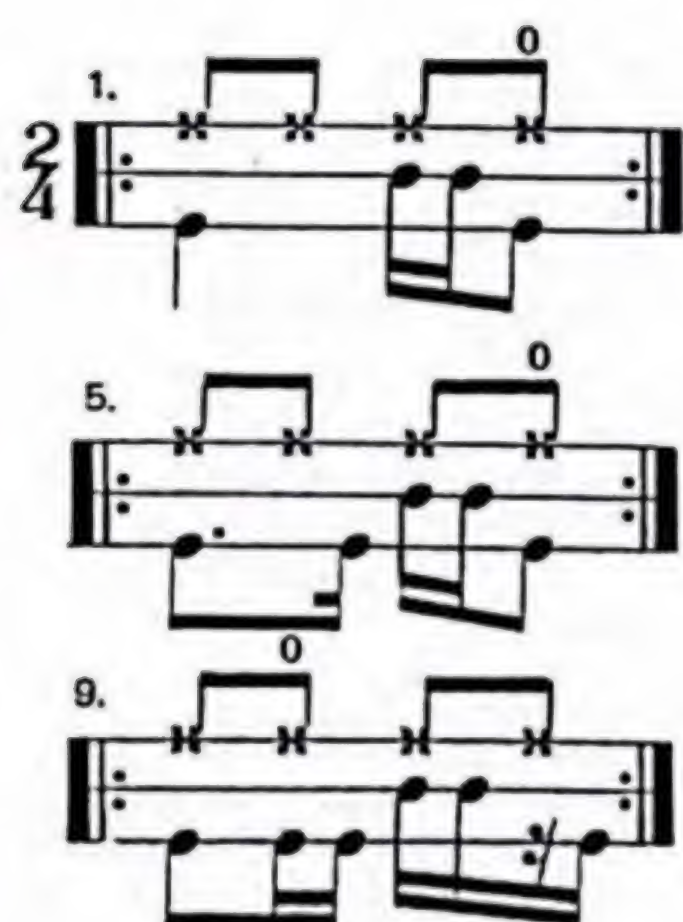
BASS DRUM VARIATIONS



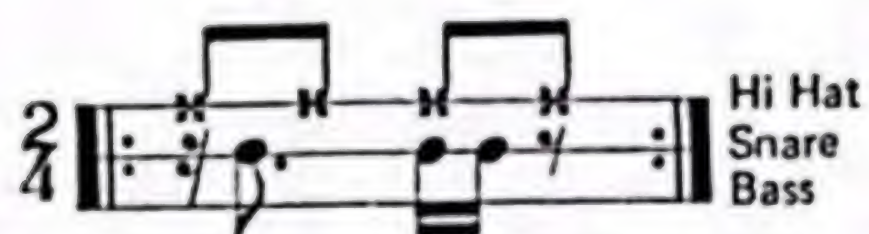
SNARE DRUM PATTERN NUMBER SIX



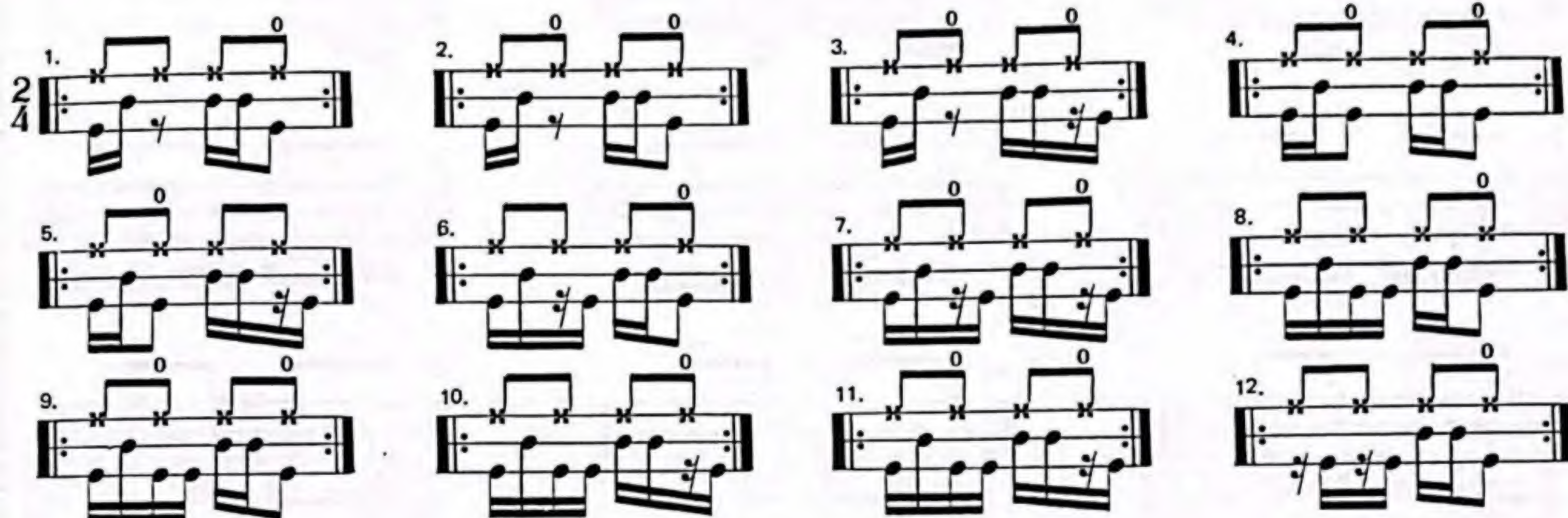
BASS DRUM VARIATIONS



SNARE DRUM PATTERN NUMBER SEVEN



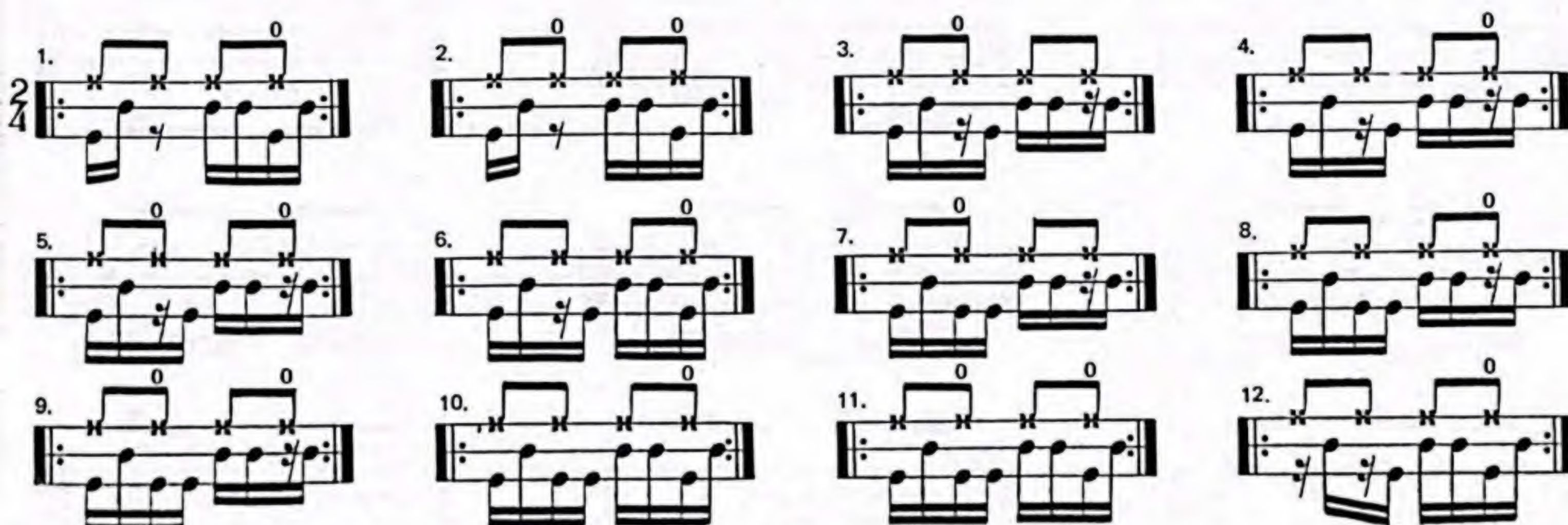
BASS DRUM VARIATIONS



SNARE DRUM PATTERN NUMBER EIGHT



BASS DRUM VARIATIONS



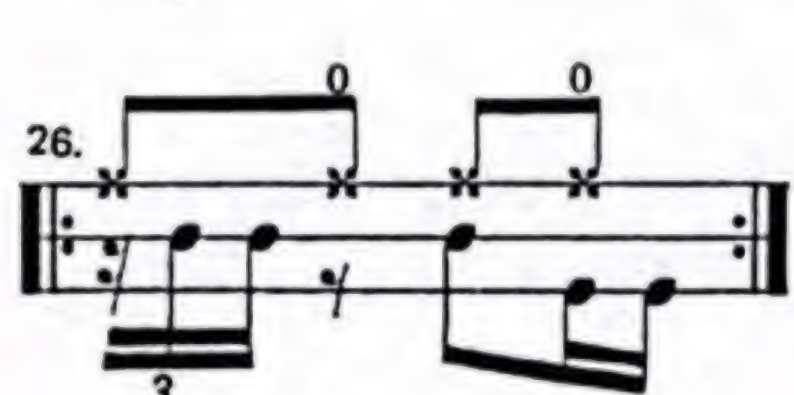
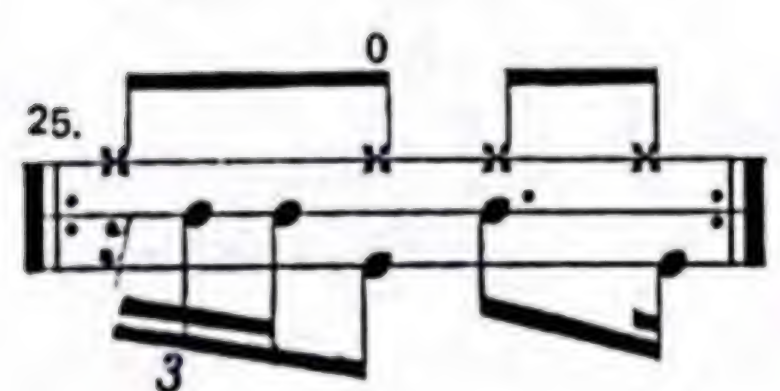
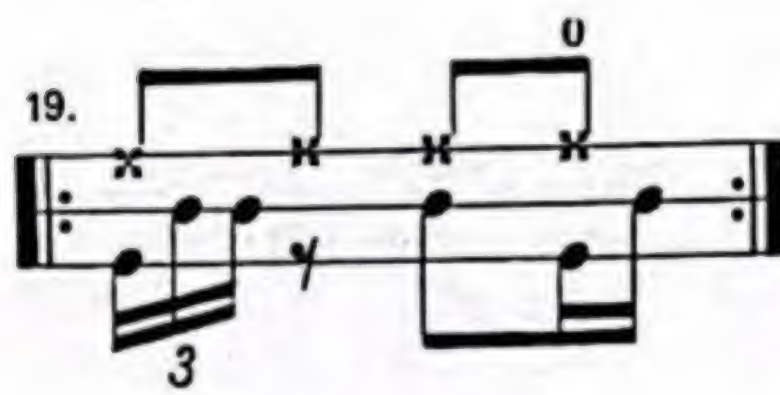
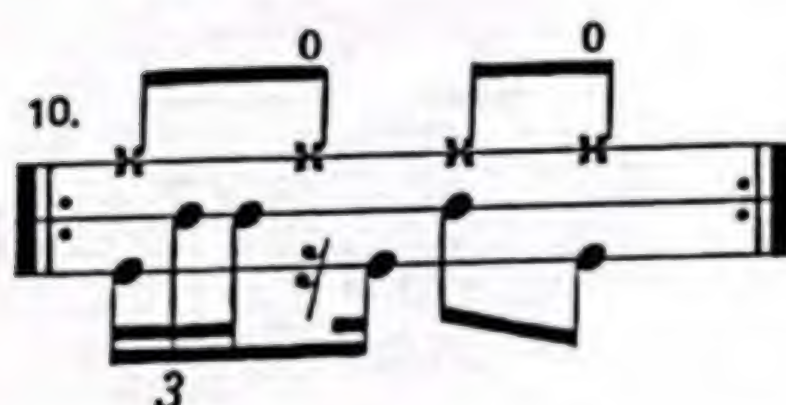
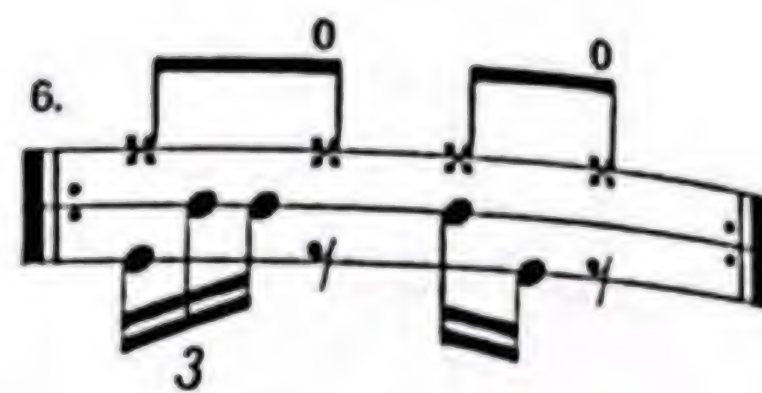
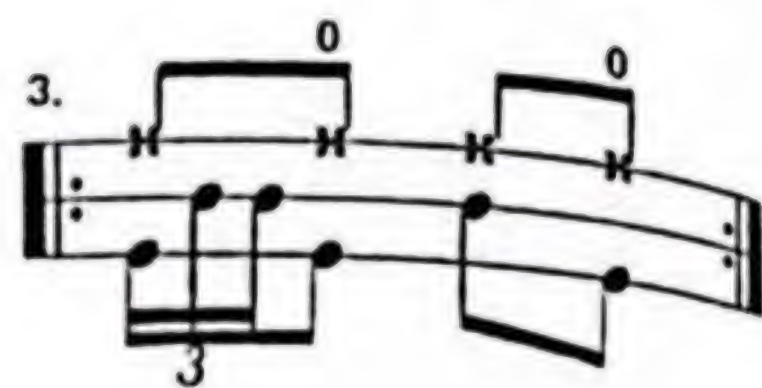
SPECIAL PATTERNS WITH 1/16 NOTE TRIPLETS



Hi Hat
Snare
Bass



Hi Hat
Snare
Bass



1.

Hi Hat
Snare
Bass

2.

Hi Hat
Snare
Bass

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

16.

17.

18.

19.

20.

21.

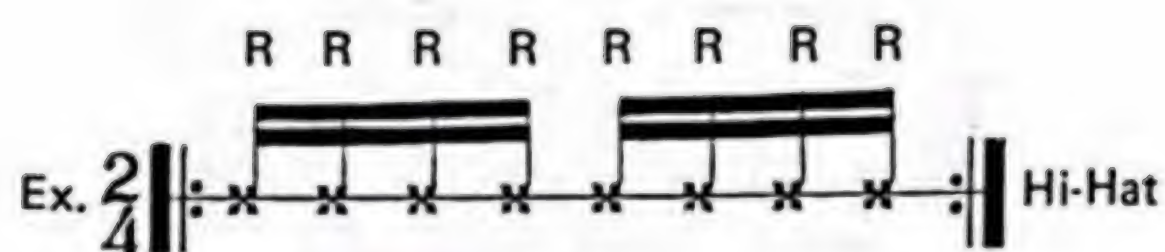
22.

23.

24.

PART TWO

SIXTEENTH-NOTES ON THE HI-HAT (Played With One Hand)



The first section showed most of the places a hi-hat can be opened and closed while playing eighth-notes. This next section will demonstrate where the hi-hat can be opened and closed using sixteenth-note rhythmic patterns (played with one hand). Obviously, the tempos at which these rhythmic patterns can be employed will have to be significantly slower than the tempos in which eighth-note patterns could be used.

Although the bass drum and snare parts are not written out on the next two pages, I suggest you play the bass on every down beat, and the snare on the count of two throughout each exercise.

BASIC PATTERNS FOR OPENING THE HI-HAT ON DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE BEAT

1. Hi Hat

2. Hi Hat

3. Hi Hat

4. Hi Hat

5. Hi Hat

6. Hi Hat

7. Hi Hat

8. Hi Hat

9. Hi Hat

10. Hi Hat

11. Hi Hat

12. Hi Hat

13. Hi Hat

14. Hi Hat

15. Hi Hat

16. Hi Hat

17. Hi Hat

18. Hi Hat

19. Hi Hat

20. Hi Hat

21. Hi Hat

22. Hi Hat

23. Hi Hat

24. Hi Hat

25. Hi Hat

26. Hi Hat

27. Hi Hat

28. Hi Hat

29. Hi Hat

30. Hi Hat

NOTE: Play the bass on one and two, and the snare on two.

1. Hi Hat

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

16.

17.

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28.

29.

30.

31.

32.

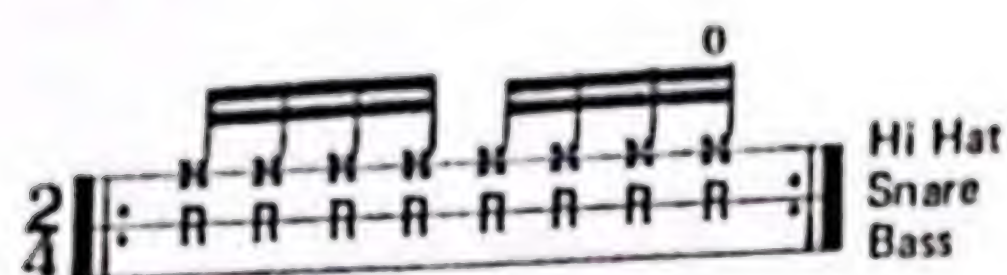
33.

NOTE: Play the bass on one and two, and the snare on two.

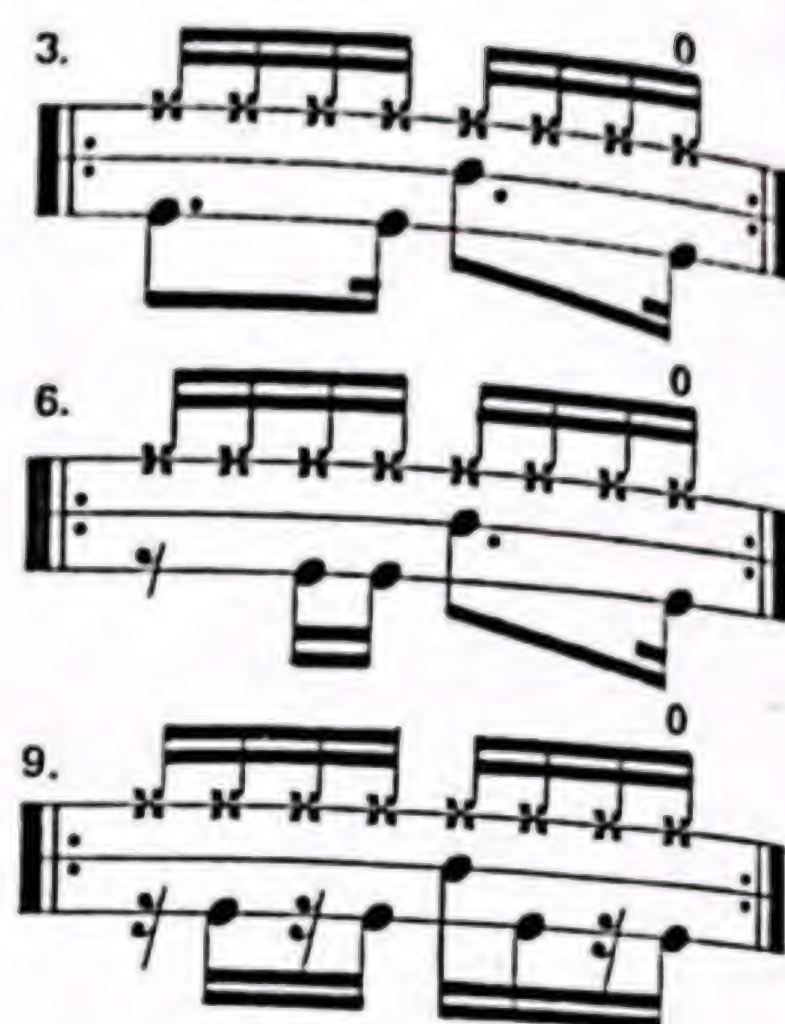
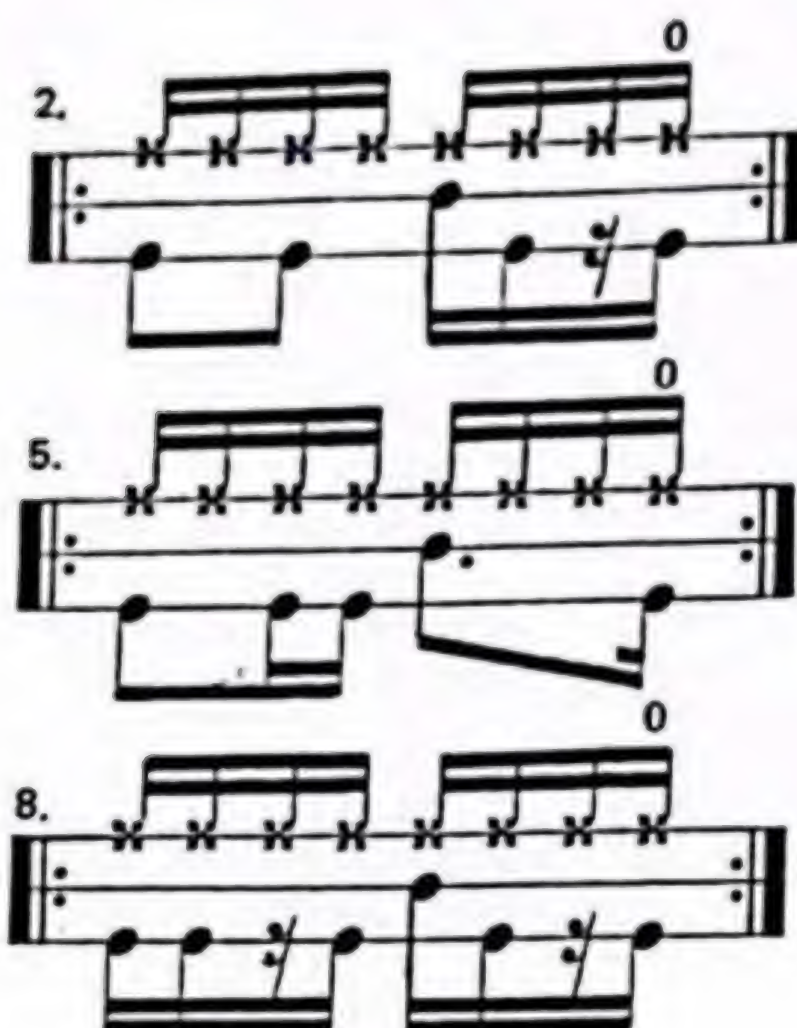
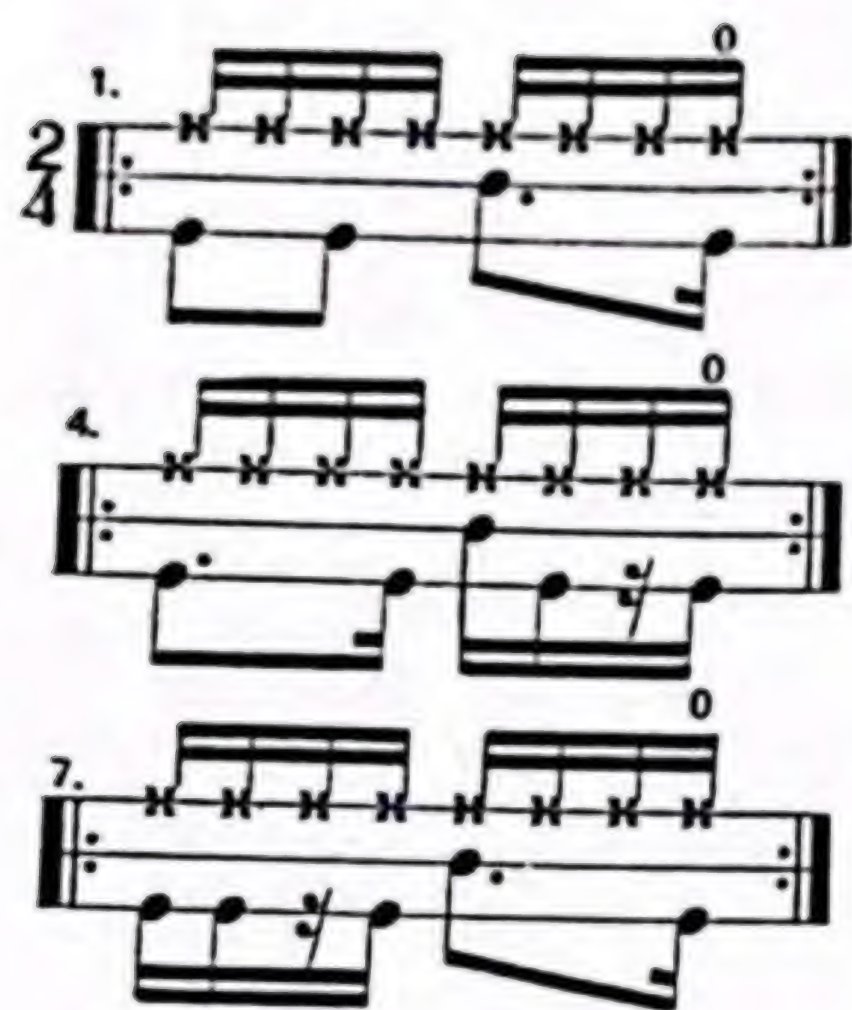
The previous two pages showed sixty-three possibilities for opening and closing the hi-hat, using sixteenth-note rhythmic patterns. The following pages present exercises to develop coordinative facility with the bass drum in relation to ten of those possibilities, which I consider the most useful from a practical point of view.

Except for one page near the end of this section, the snare drum will play only on the count of two.

HI-HAT PATTERN NUMBER ONE



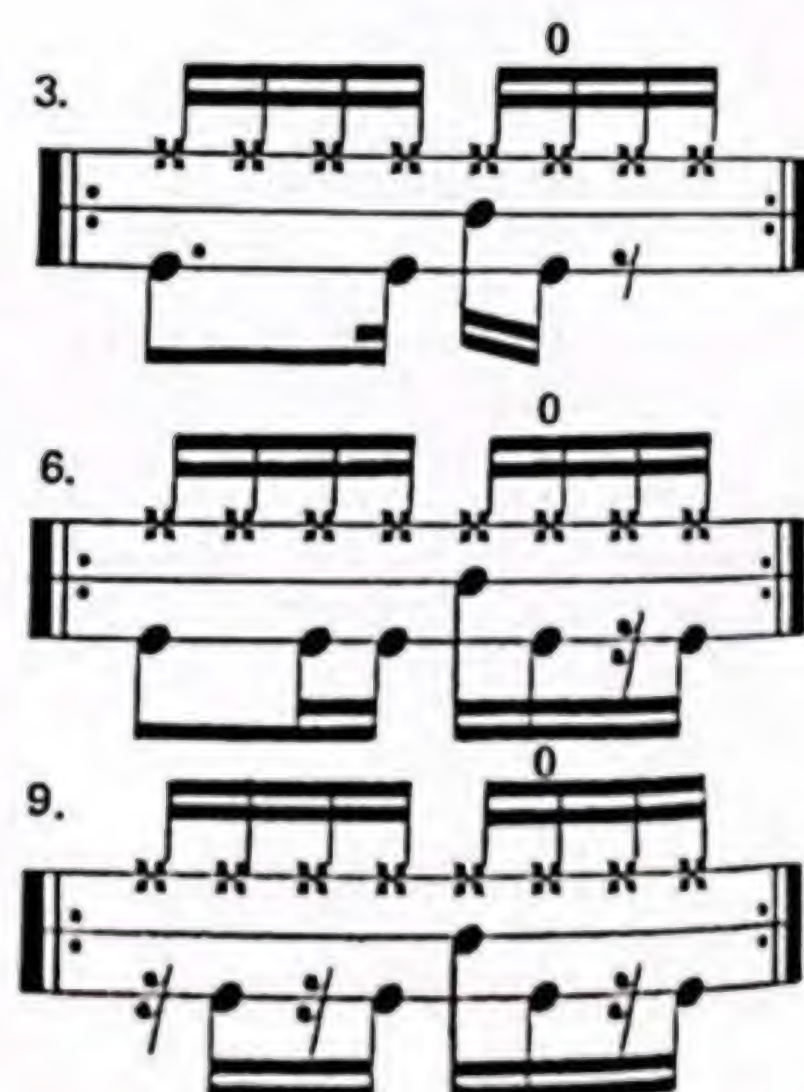
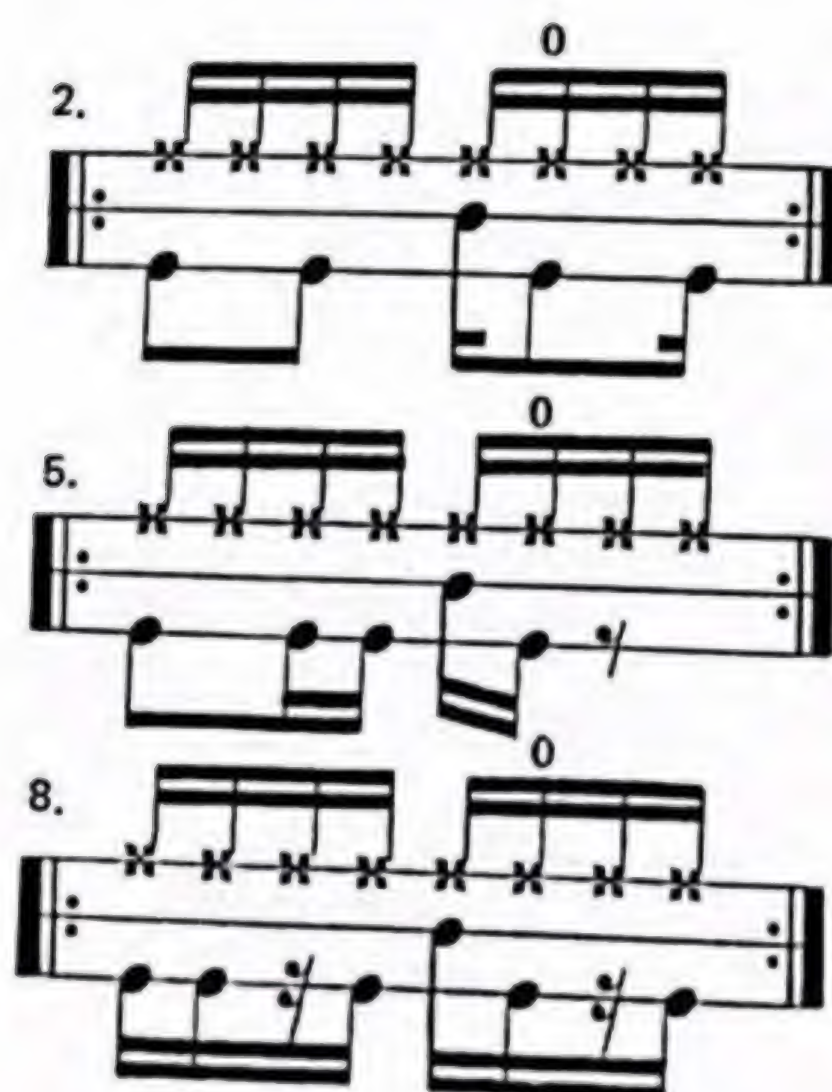
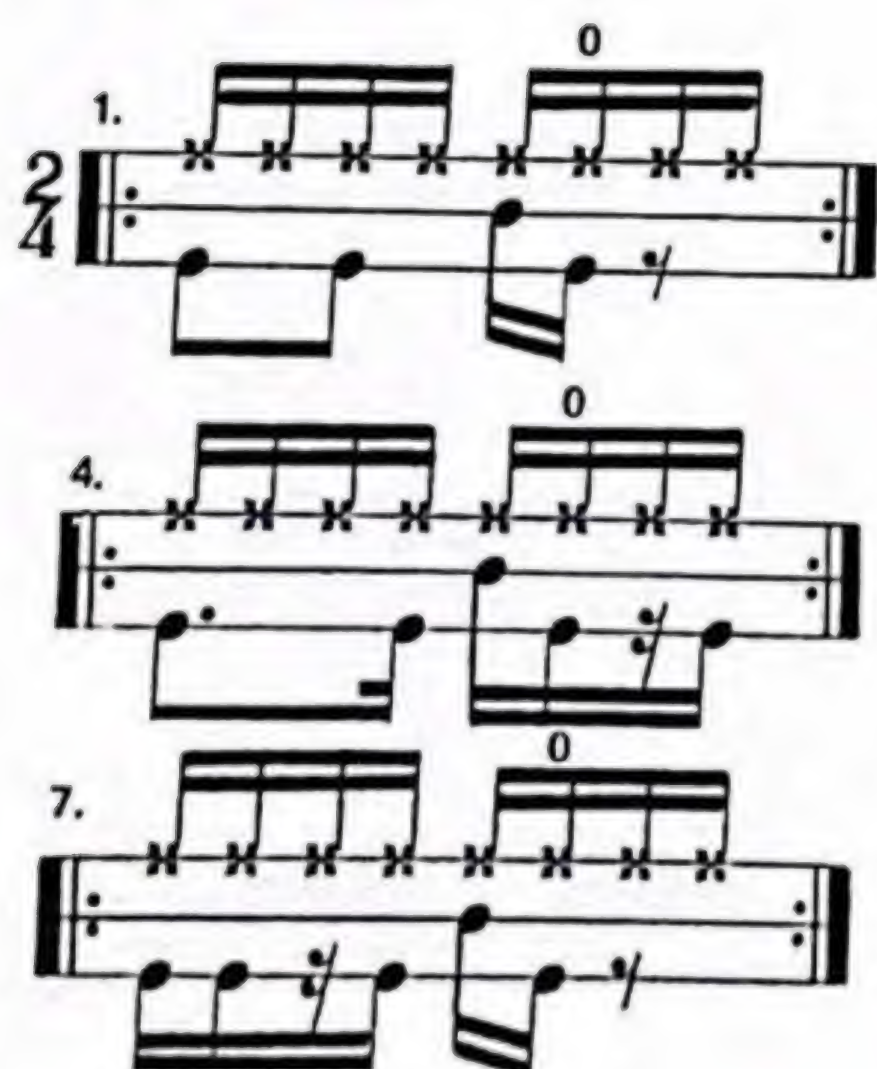
BASS DRUM VARIATIONS



HI-HAT PATTERN NUMBER TWO



BASS DRUM VARIATIONS



HI-HAT NUMBER THREE

25

0

2/4

Hi Hat
Snare
Bass

BASS DRUM VARIATIONS

1. 0

2/4

4. 0

7. 0

2. 0

5. 0

8. 0

3. 0

6. 0

9. 0

HI-HAT NUMBER FOUR

0

2/4

Hi Hat
Snare
Bass

BASS DRUM VARIATIONS

1. 0

2/4

4. 0

7. 0

2. 0

5. 0

8. 0

3. 0

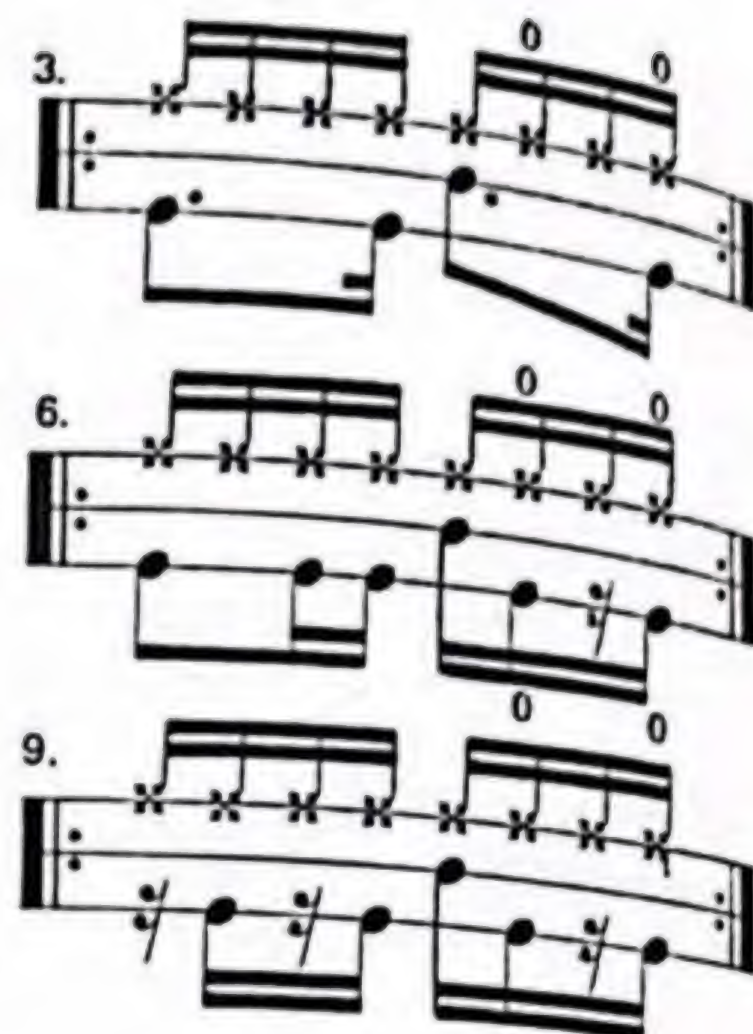
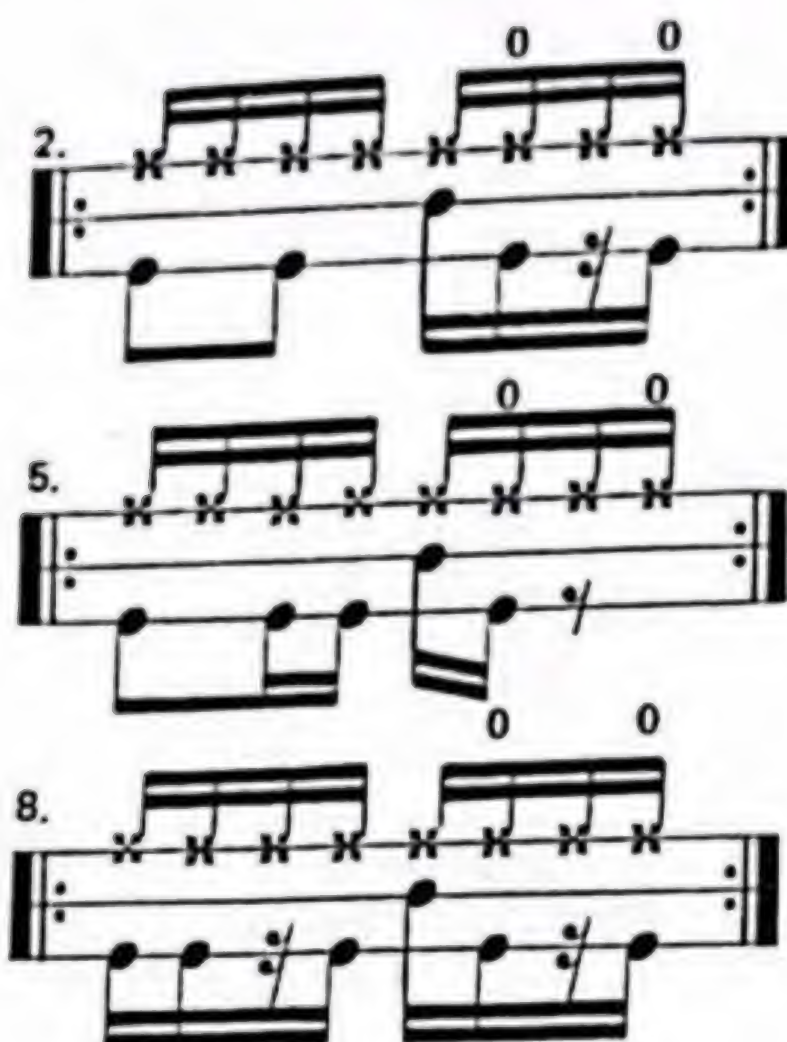
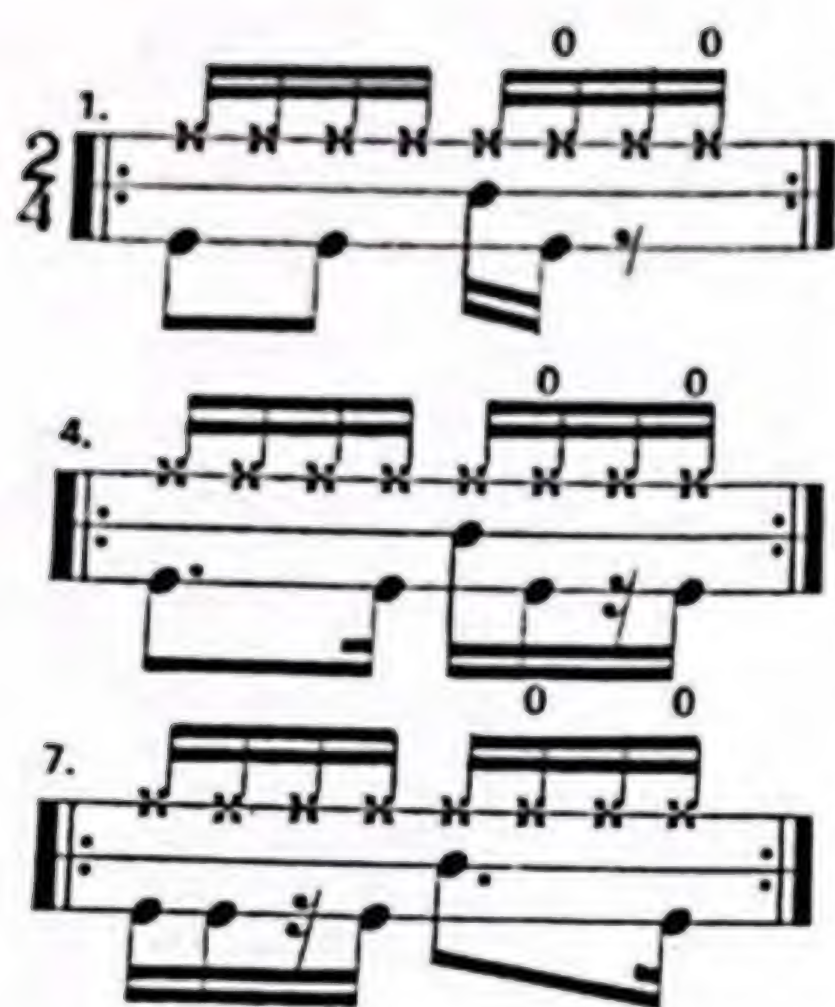
6. 0

9. 0

HI-HAT PATTERN NUMBER FIVE



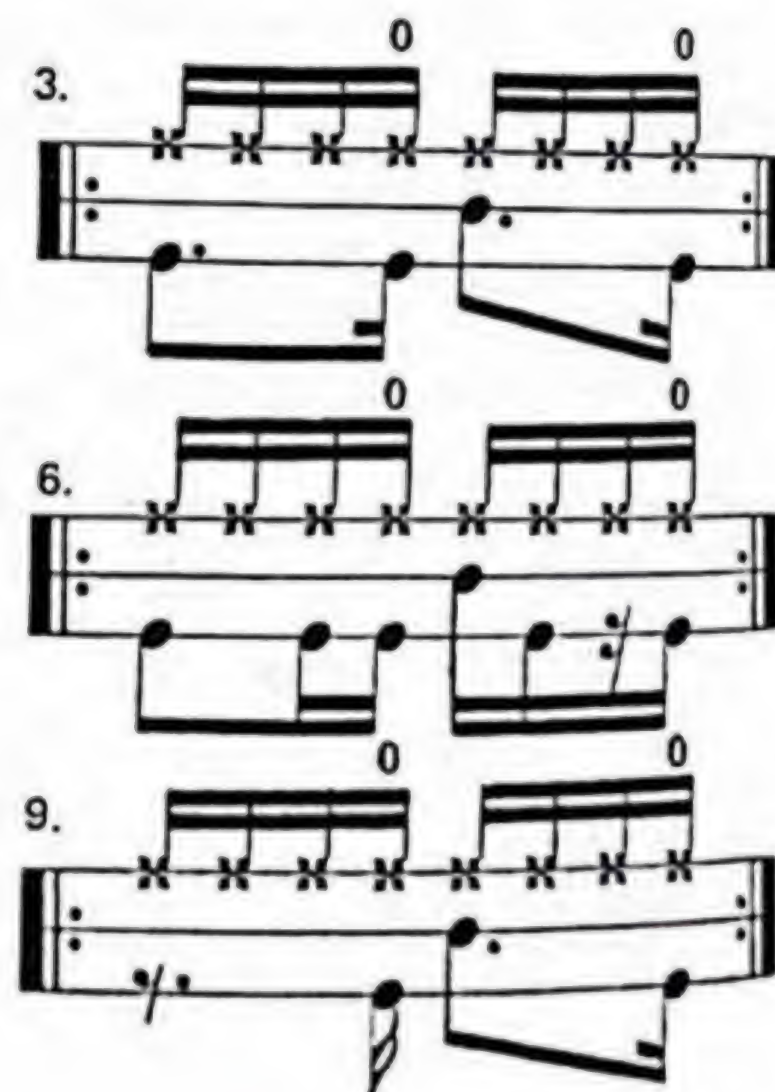
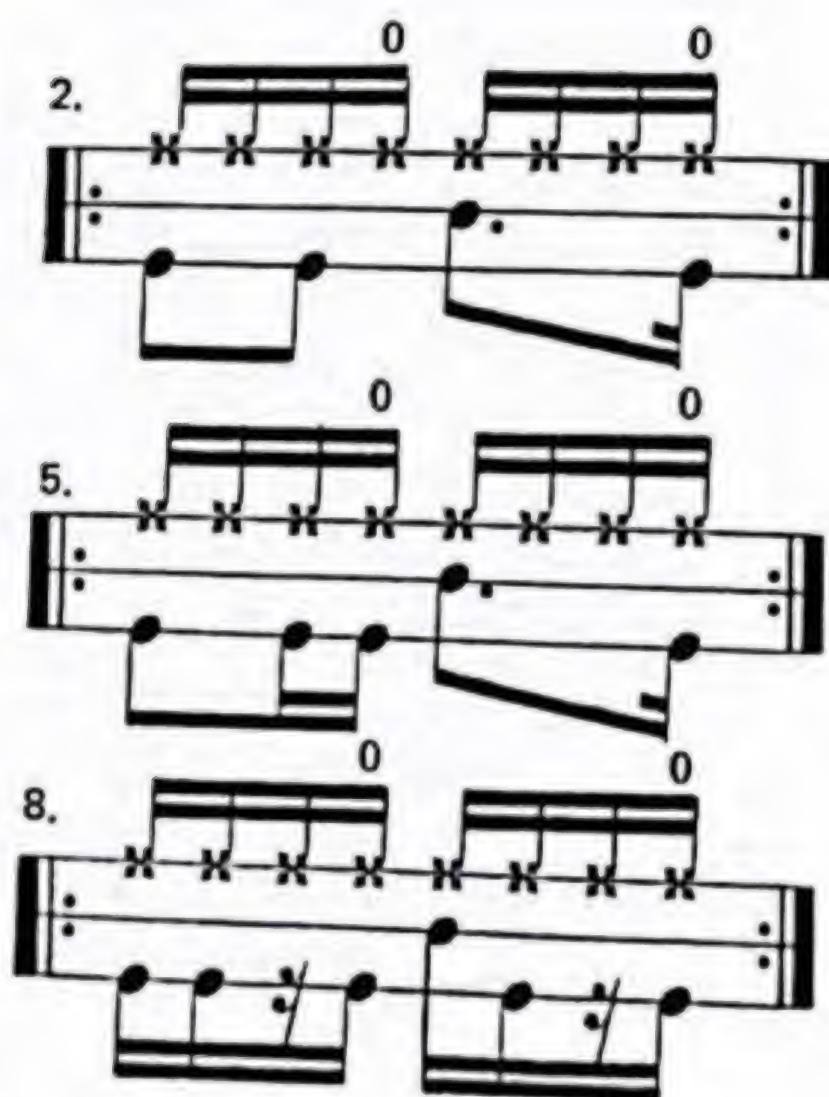
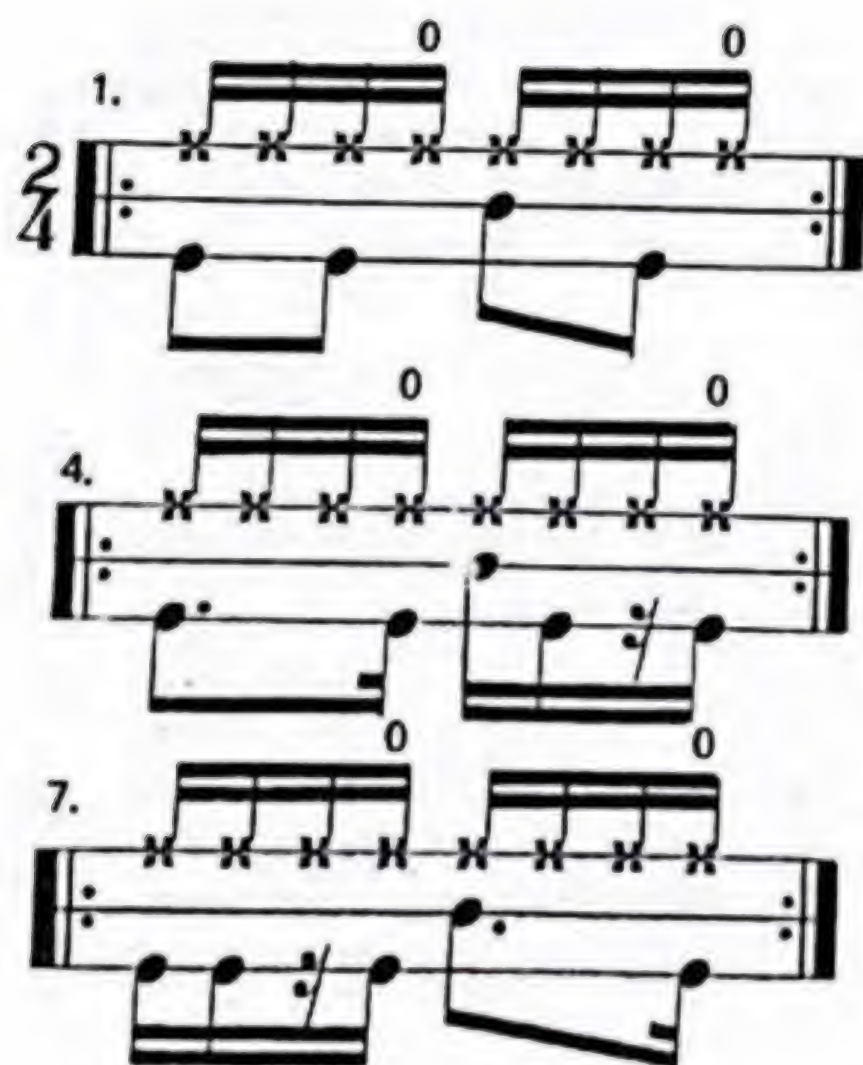
BASS DRUM VARIATIONS



HI-HAT PATTERN NUMBER SIX



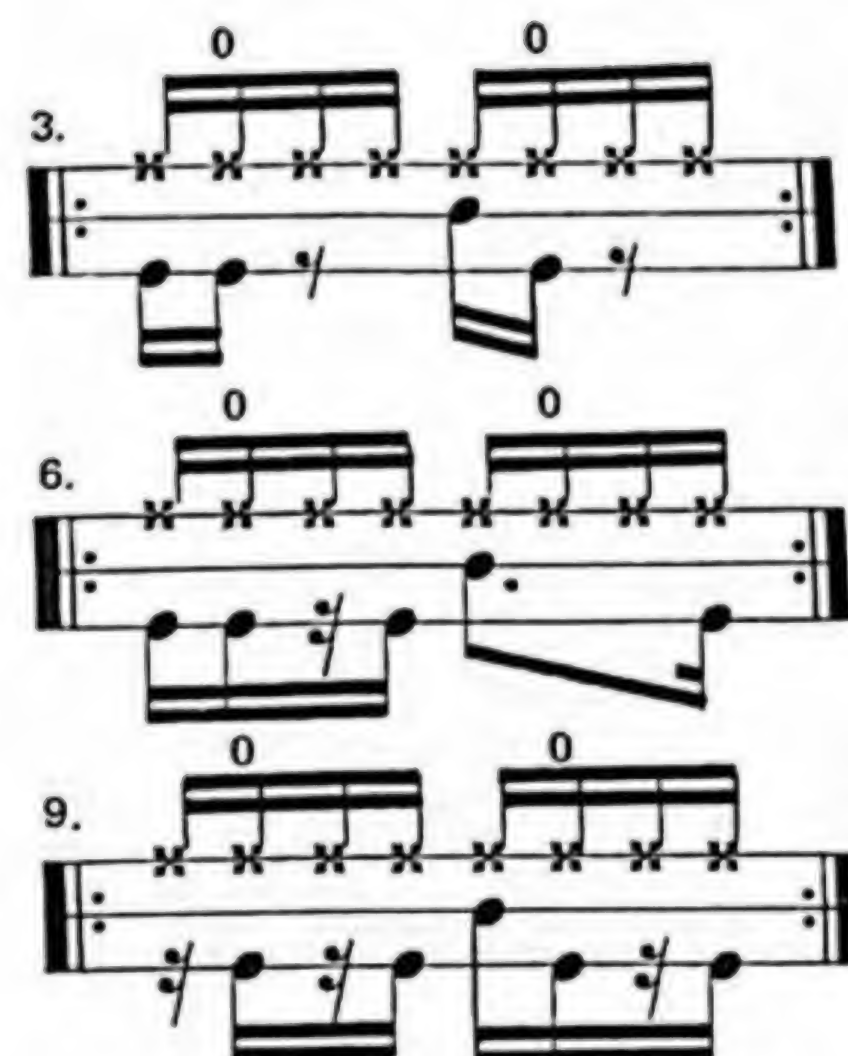
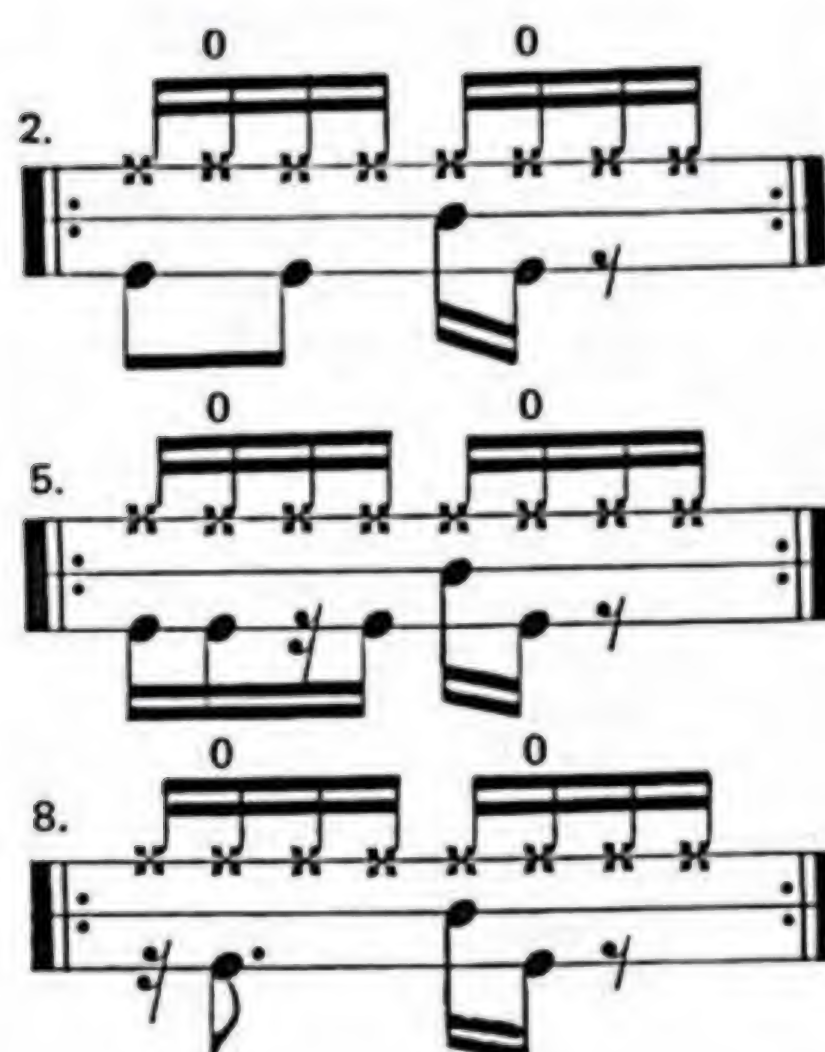
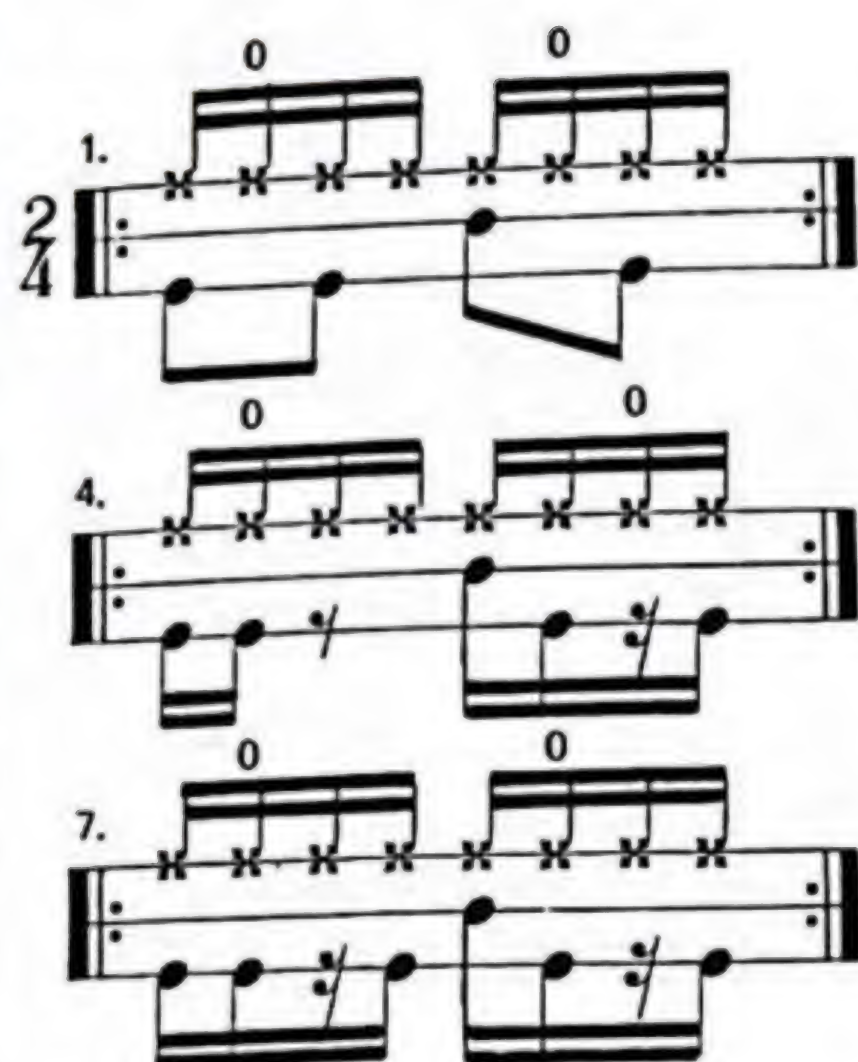
BASS DRUM VARIATIONS



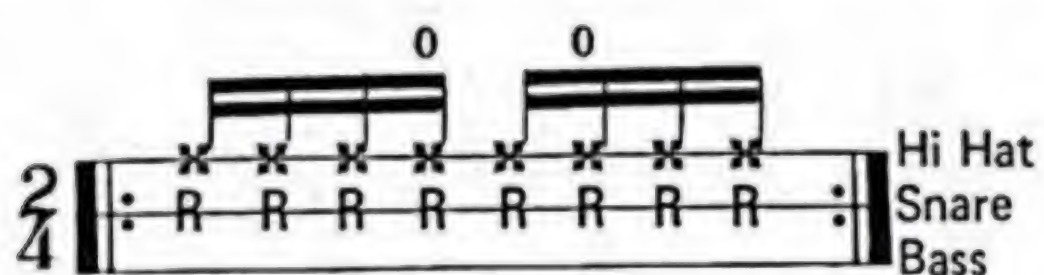
HI-HAT PATTERN NUMBER SEVEN



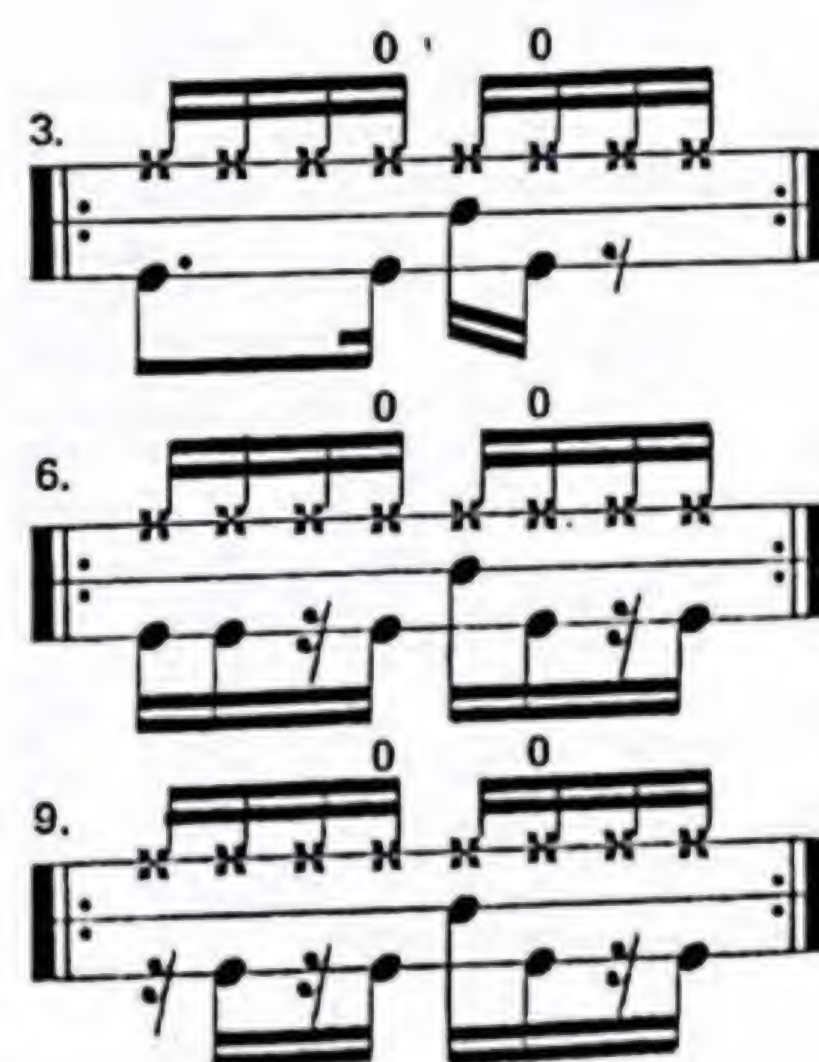
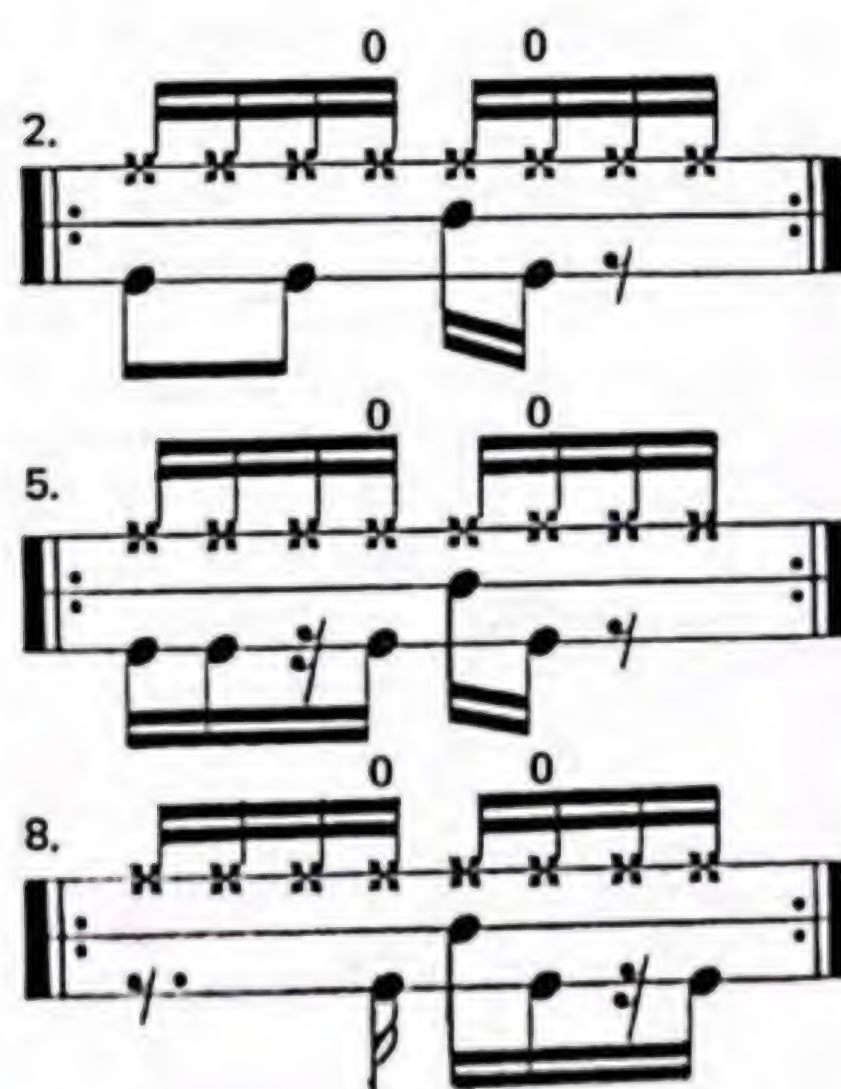
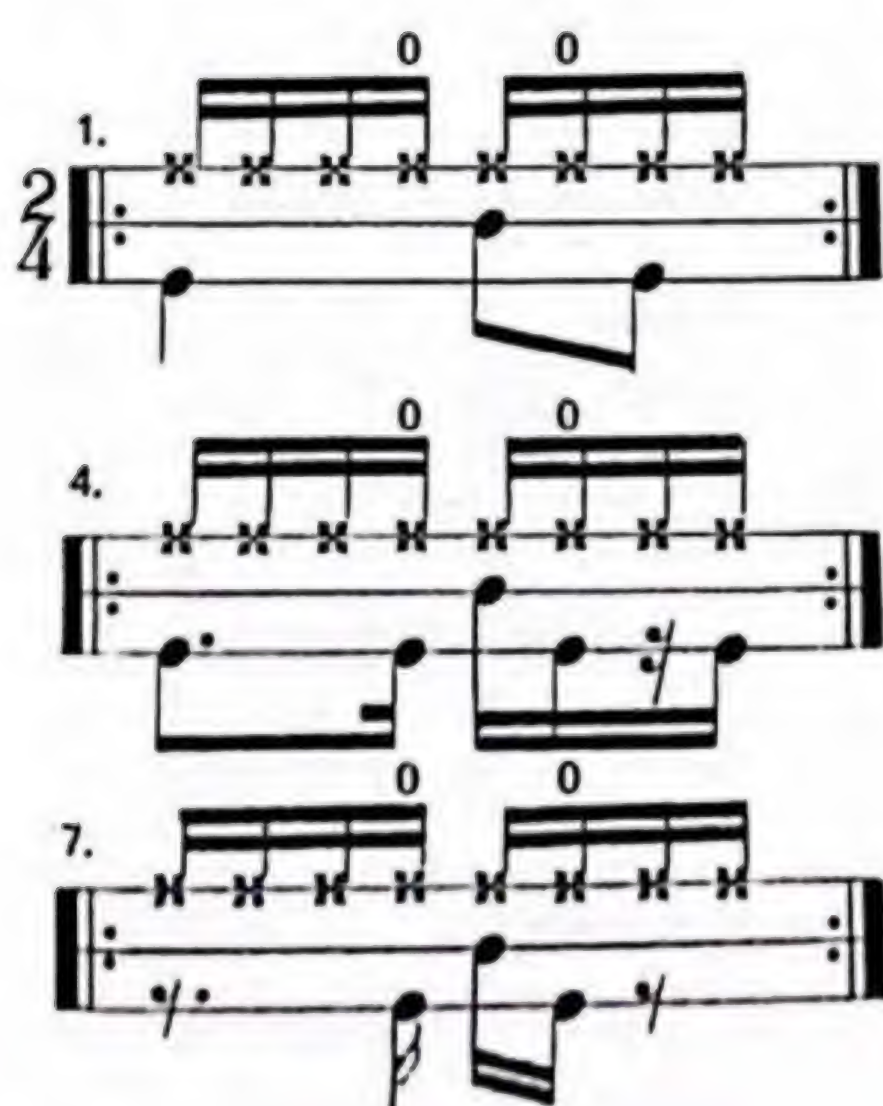
BASS DRUM VARIATIONS



HI-HAT PATTERN NUMBER EIGHT



BASS DRUM VARIATIONS



HI-HAT PATTERN NUMBER NINE

2/4

Hi Hat
Snare
Bass

BASS DRUM VARIATIONS

1. 2/4

2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9.

HI-HAT PATTERN NUMBER TEN

2/4

Hi Hat
Snare
Bass

BASS DRUM VARIATIONS

1. 2/4

2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12.

VARIATIONS FOR SNARE AND BASS



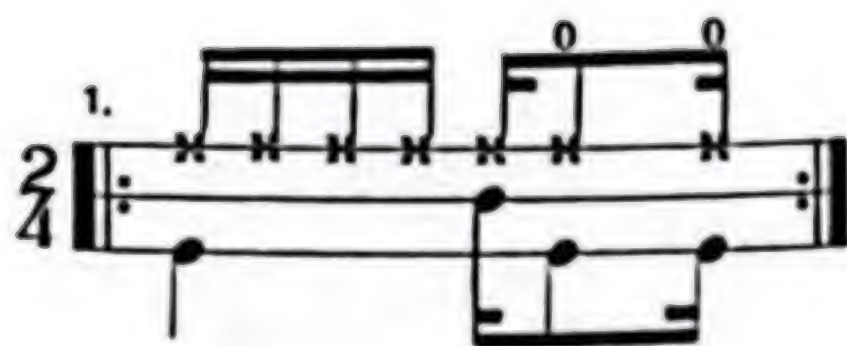
Hi Hat
Snare
Bass



Hi Hat
Snare
Bass



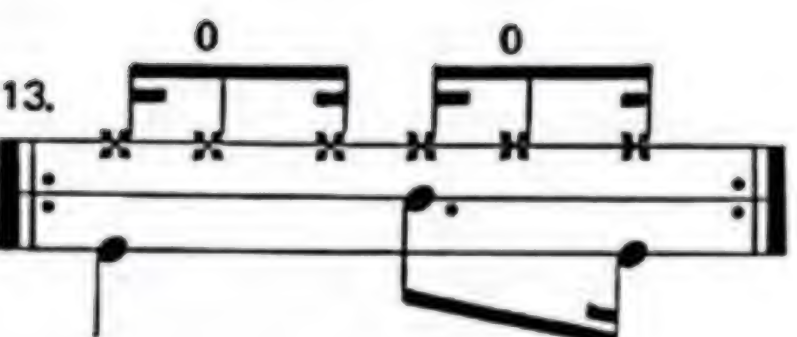
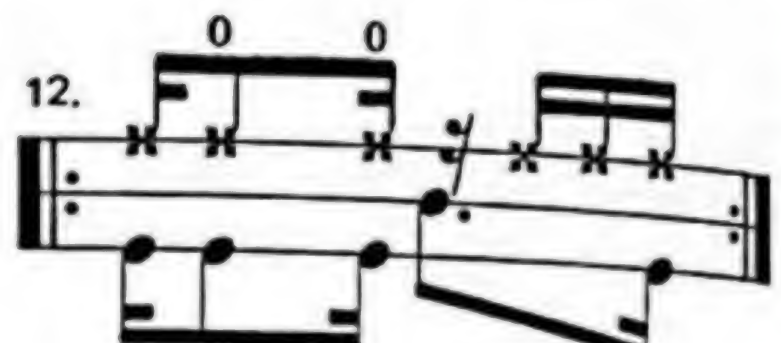
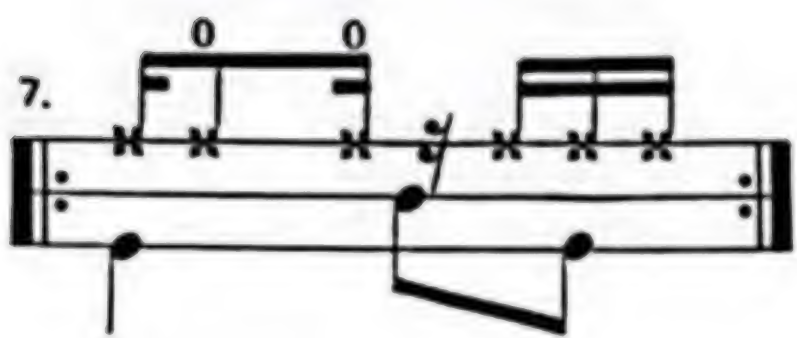
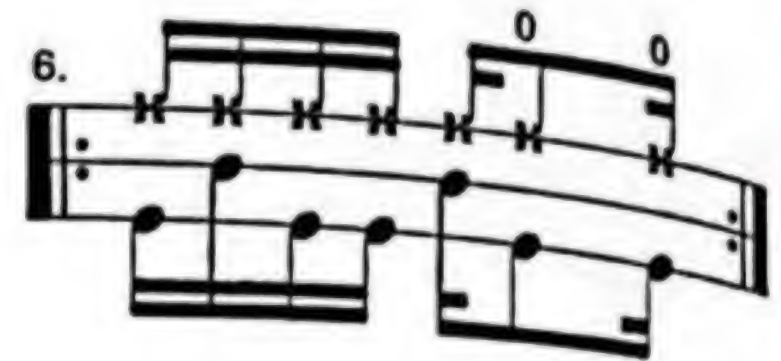
EXTRA PATTERNS



Hi Hat
Snare
Bass



Hi Hat
Snare
Bass

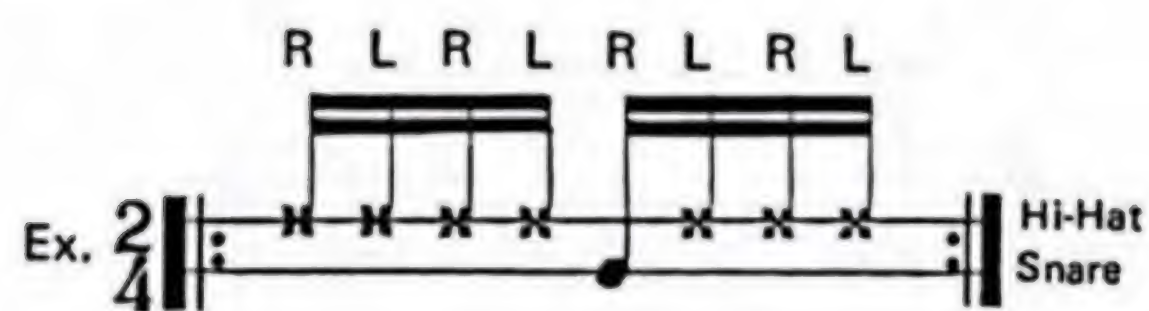


PART THREE

SIXTEENTH NOTES ON THE HI-HAT (Played With Alternating Hands)

Until now, all notes on the hi-hat have been played with the right hand alone. This next section, however, demonstrates another common way for playing steady sixteenth-note patterns on the hi-hat by using an alternating sticking.

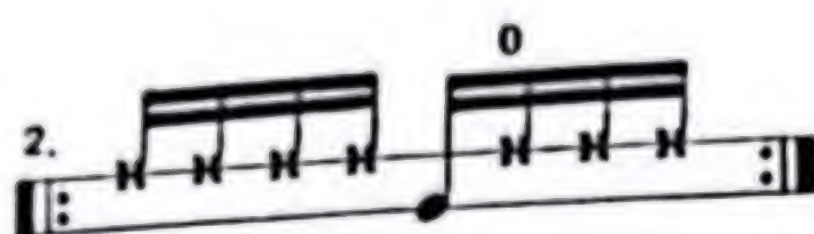
NOTE: The right hand will play the snare on the count of two, but the effect will still sound like continual sixteenth-notes on the hi-hat.



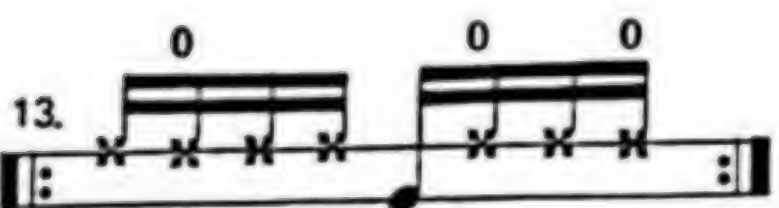
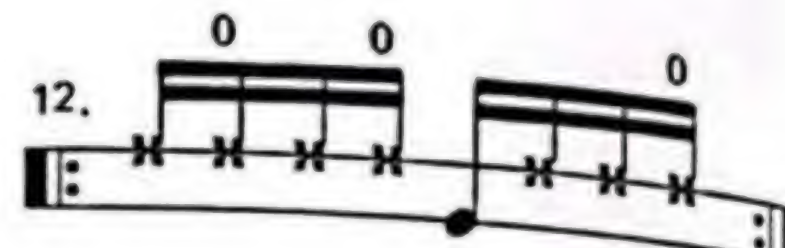
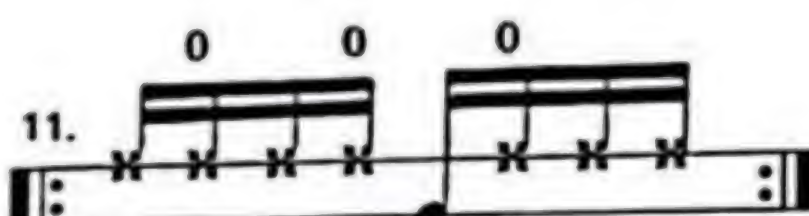
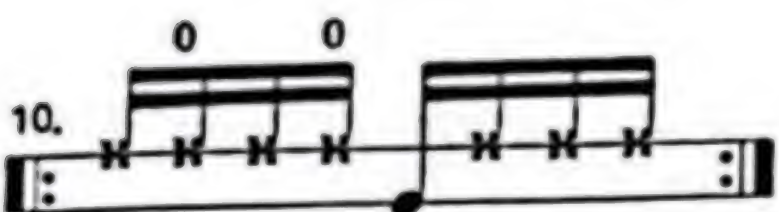
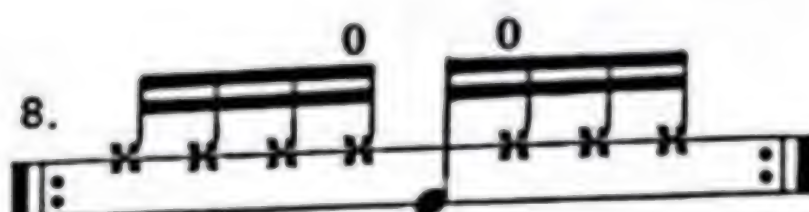
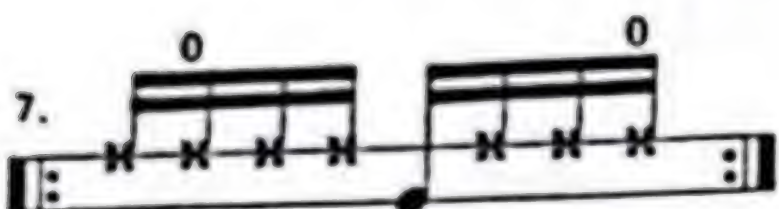
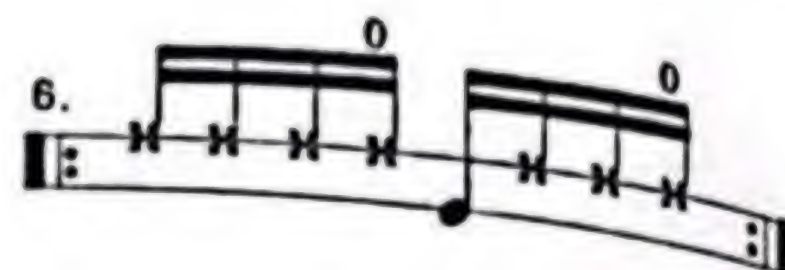
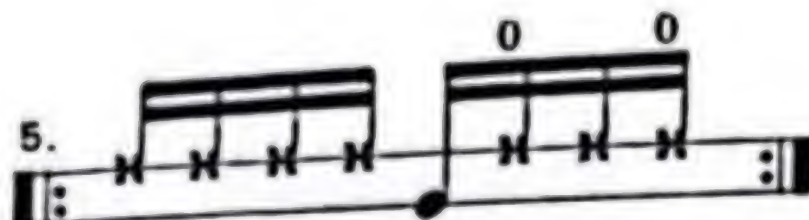
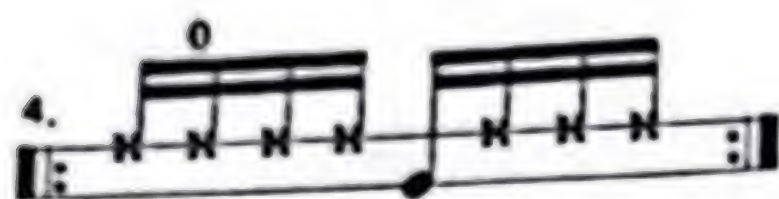
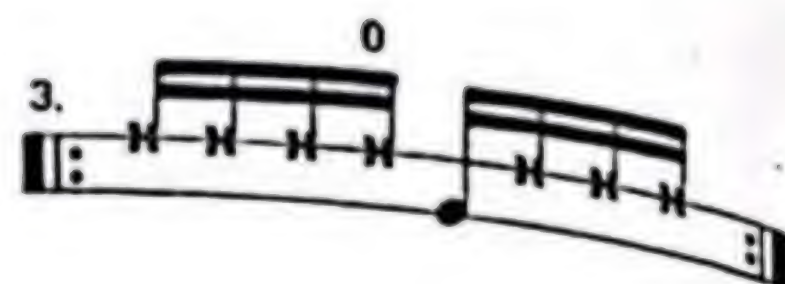
BASIC PATTERNS FOR OPENING AND CLOSING THE HI-HAT ON DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE BEAT



Hi Hat
Snare



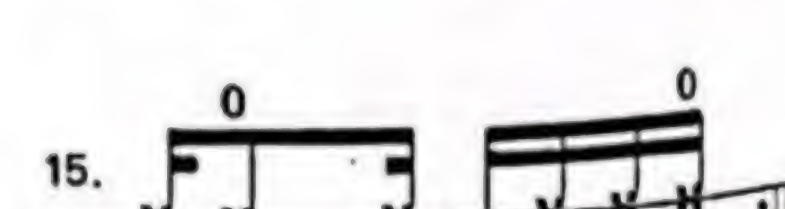
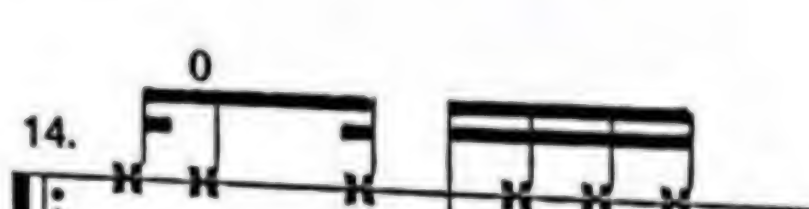
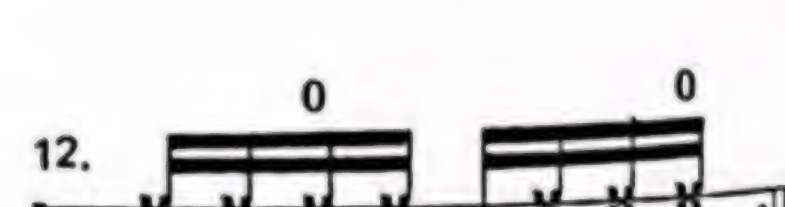
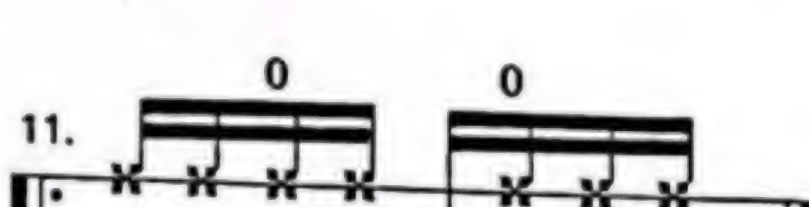
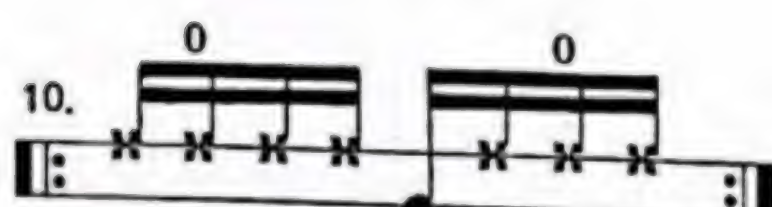
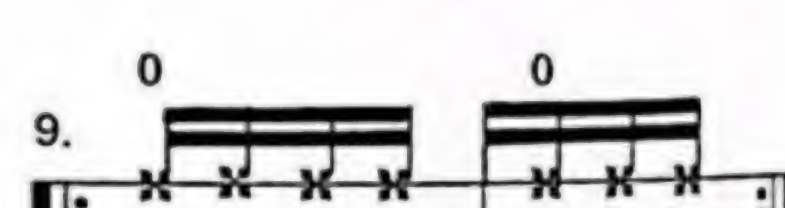
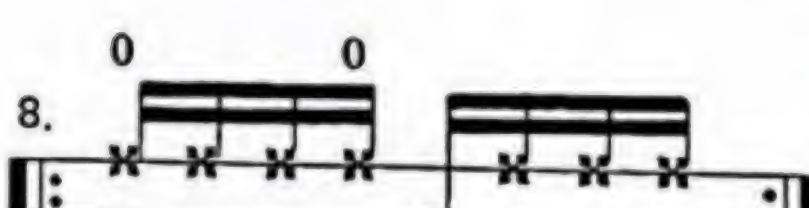
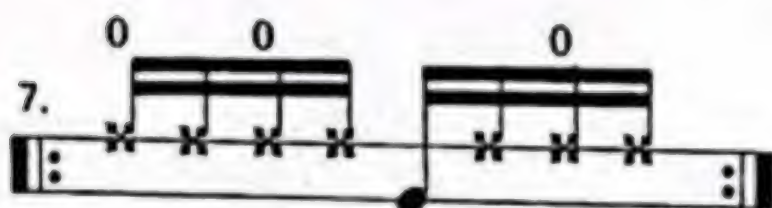
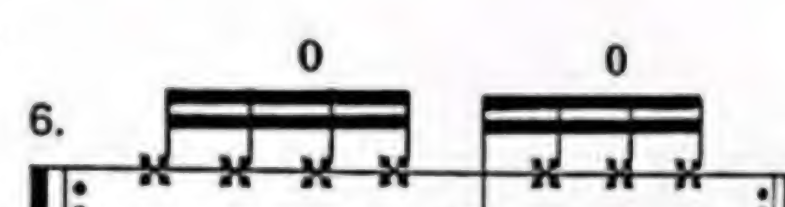
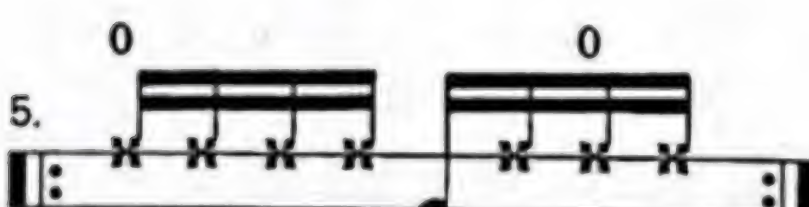
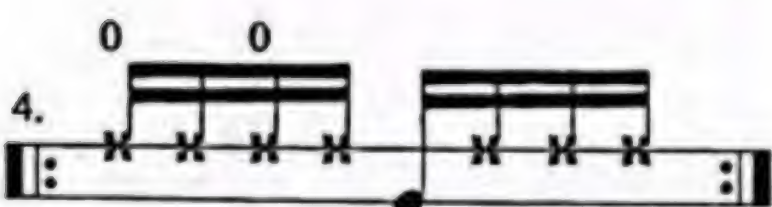
Hi Hat
Snare



Hi Hat
Snare



Hi Hat
Snare



R L R L R R L

NOTE: Play the bass on one and two.

R L L R L R L

R L L R L R L

BASS DRUM VARIATIONS

1. R L R L R L R L

Hi Hat
Snare
Bass

2.

Hi Hat
Snare
Bass

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

16.

17.

18.

19.

20.

21.

22.

23.

24.

1. R L R L R L R L

Hi Hat
Snare
Bass

2.

Hi Hat
Snare
Bass

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

16.

17.

18.

19.

20.

21.

22.

23.

24.

25.

26.

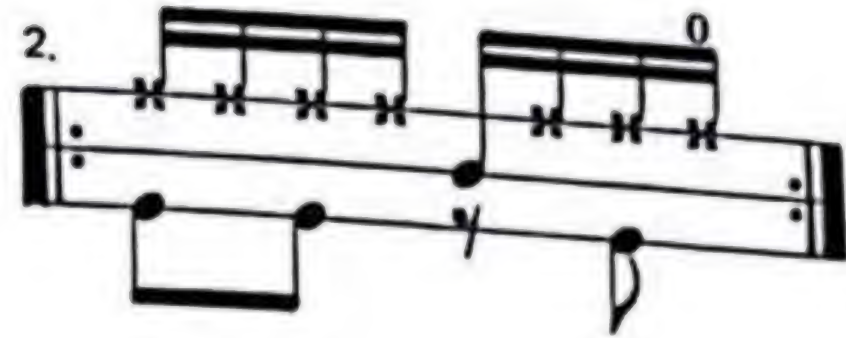
27.

BASS DRUM VARIATIONS WITH OPENED AND CLOSED HI-HAT PATTERNS

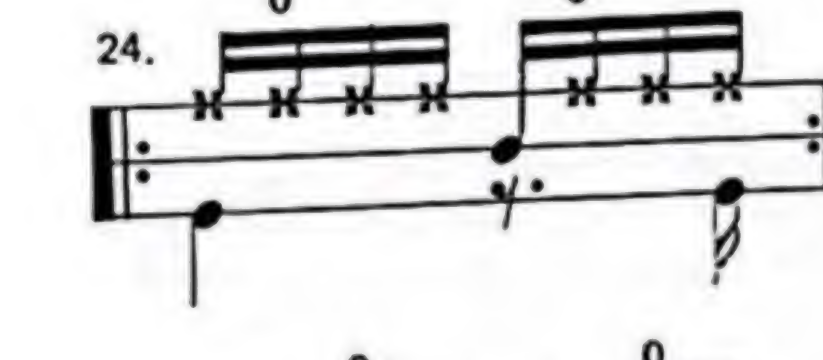
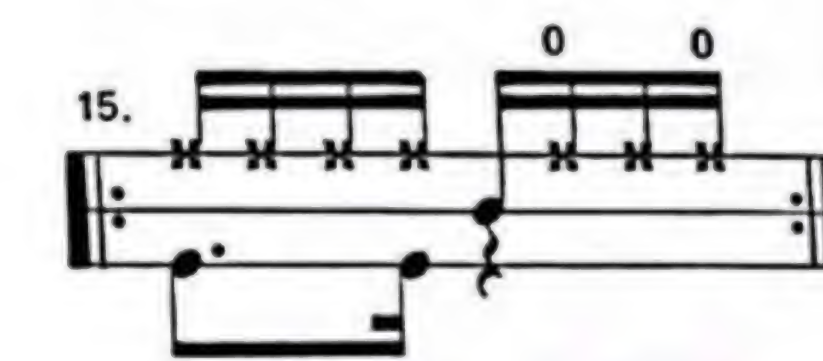
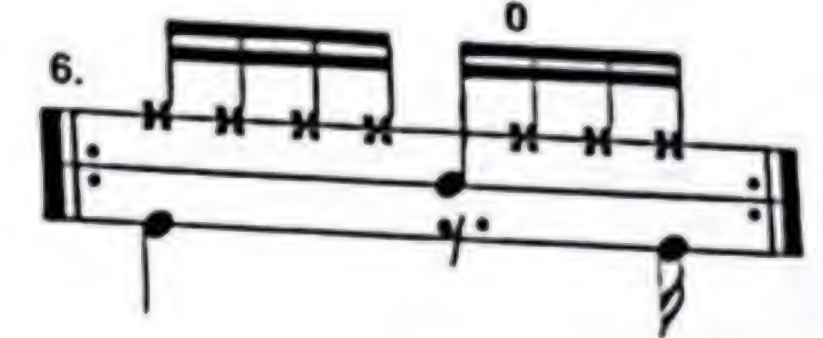
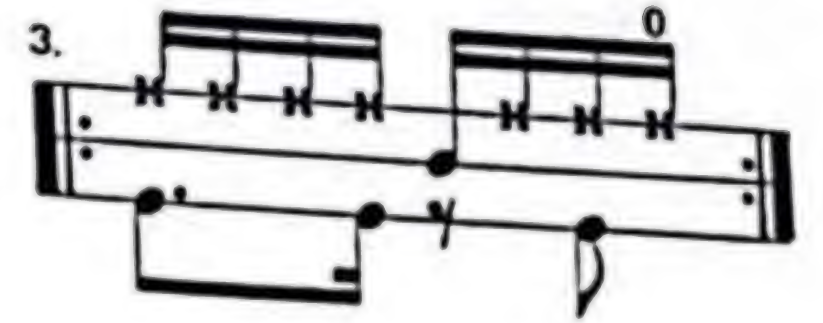
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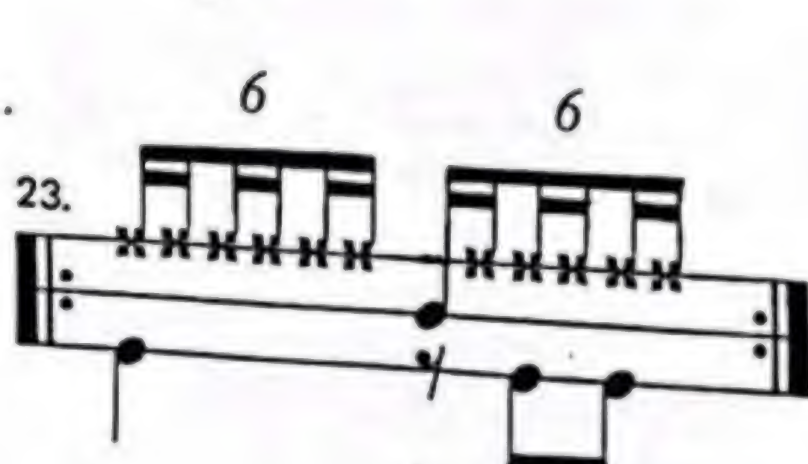
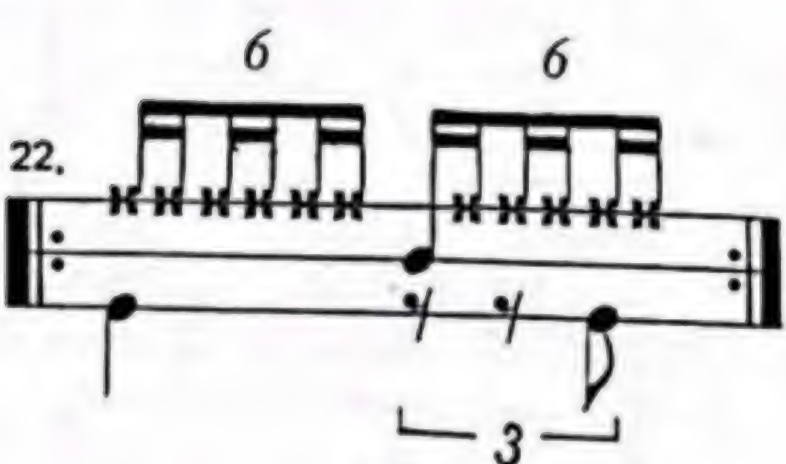
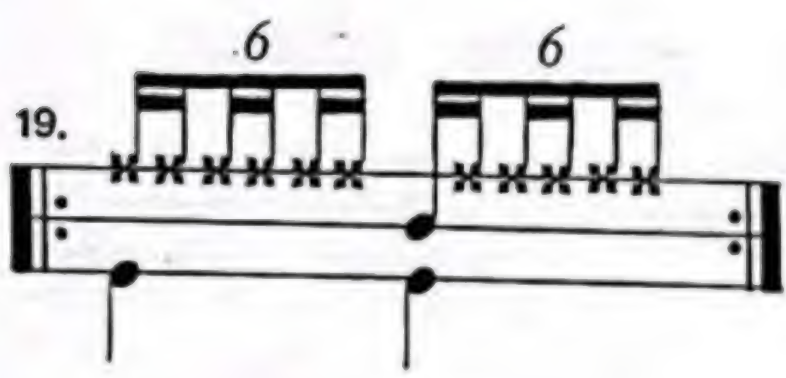
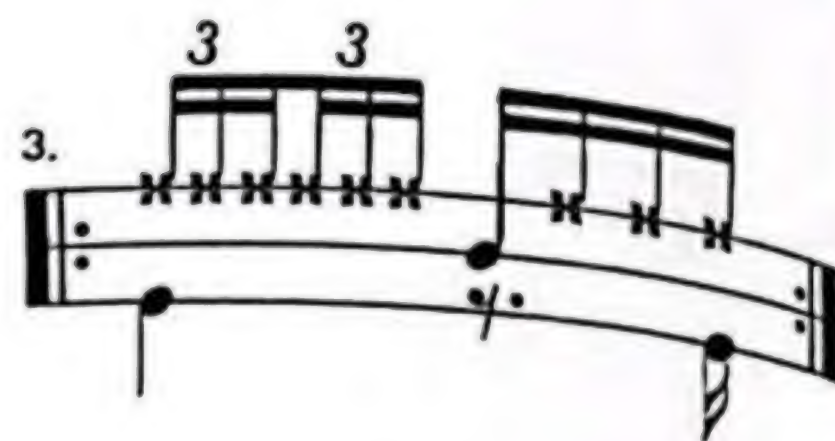
Hi Hat
Snare
Bass



Hi Hat
Snare
Bass

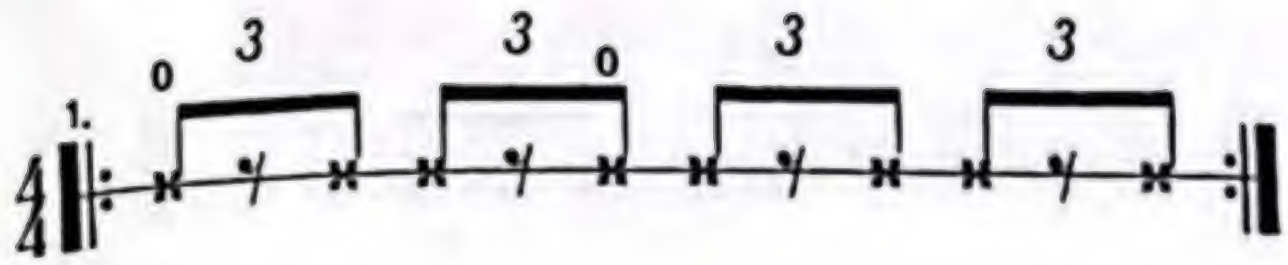


SPECIAL HI-HAT PATTERNS WITH 1/16 NOTE TRIPLETS

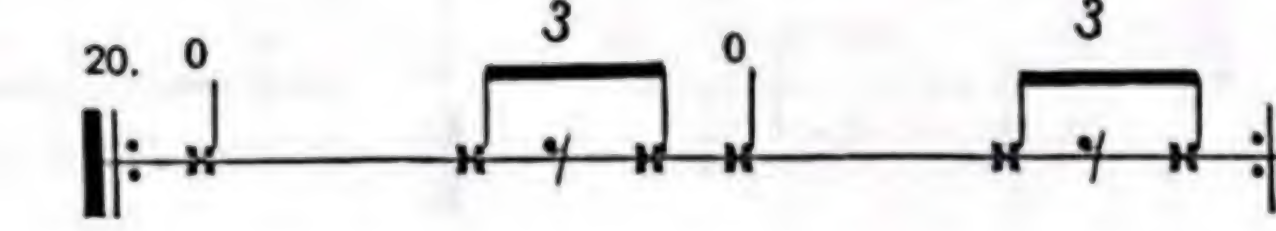
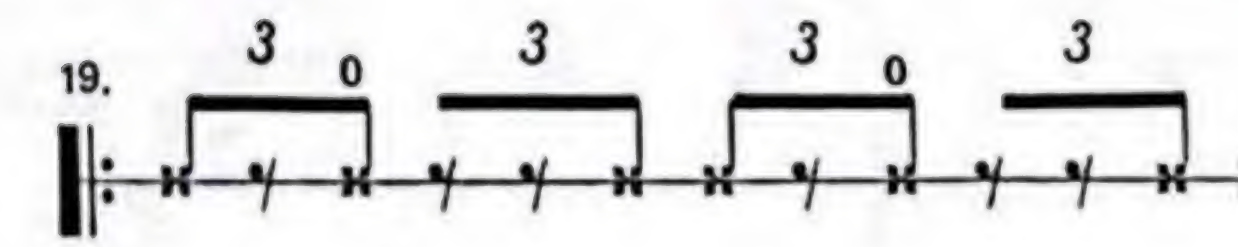
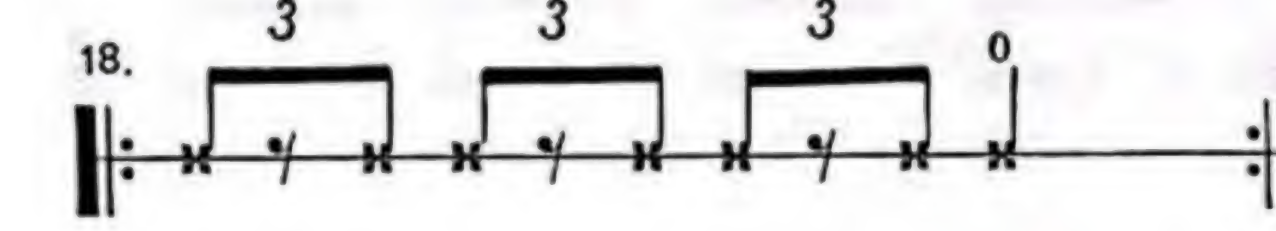
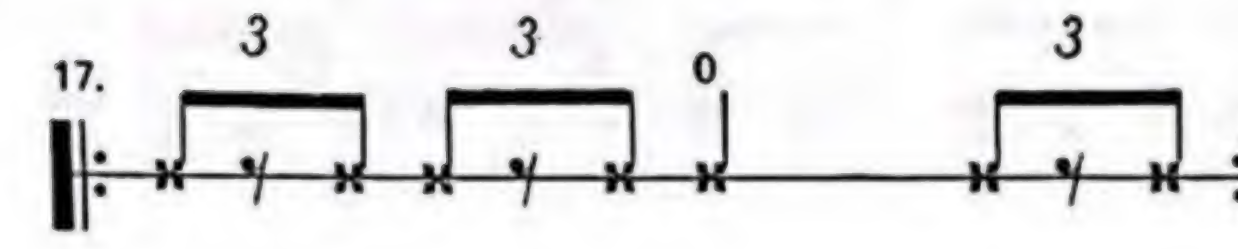
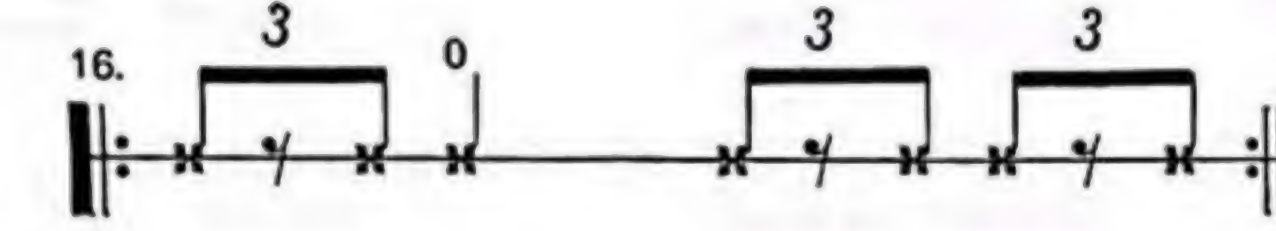
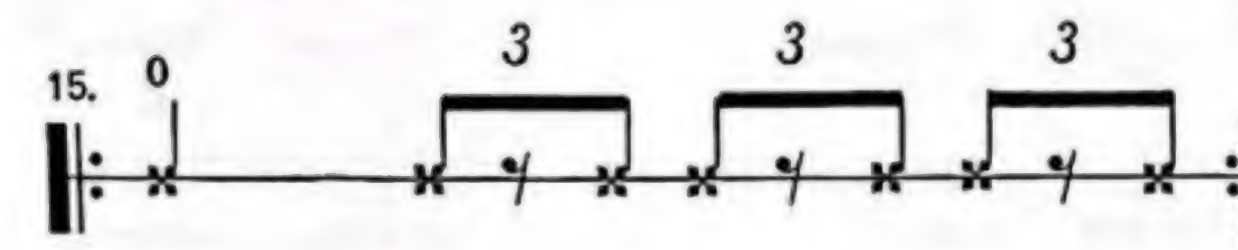
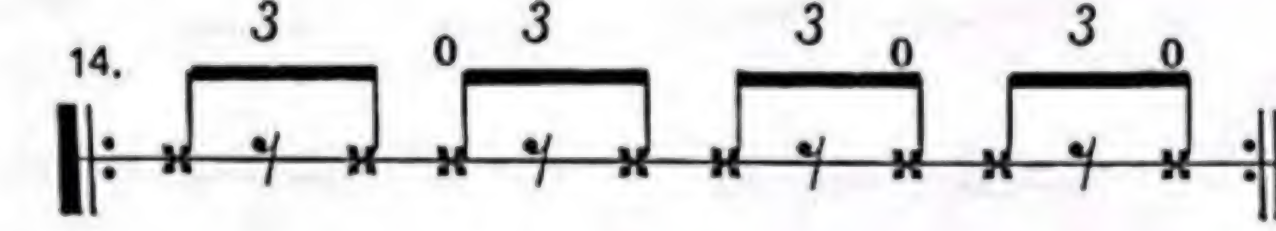
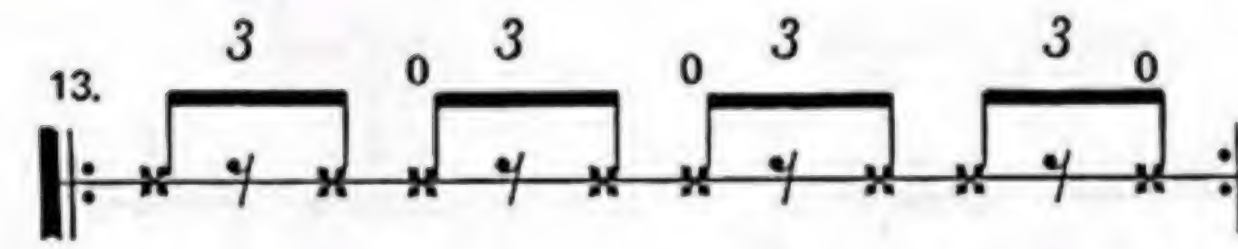
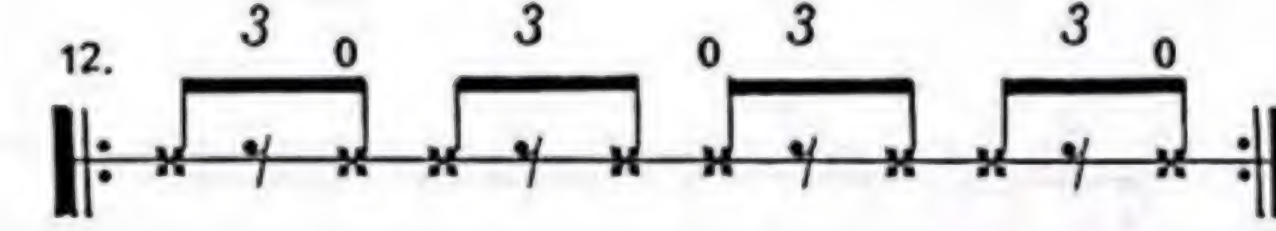
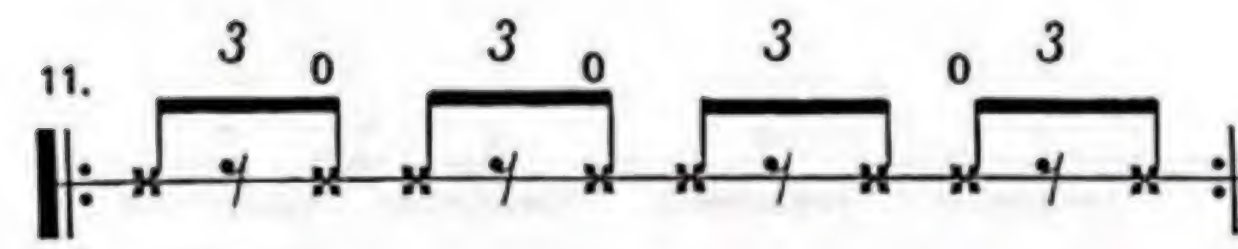
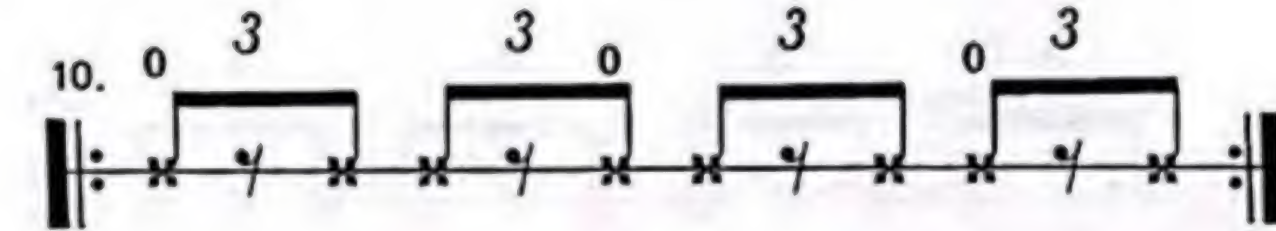
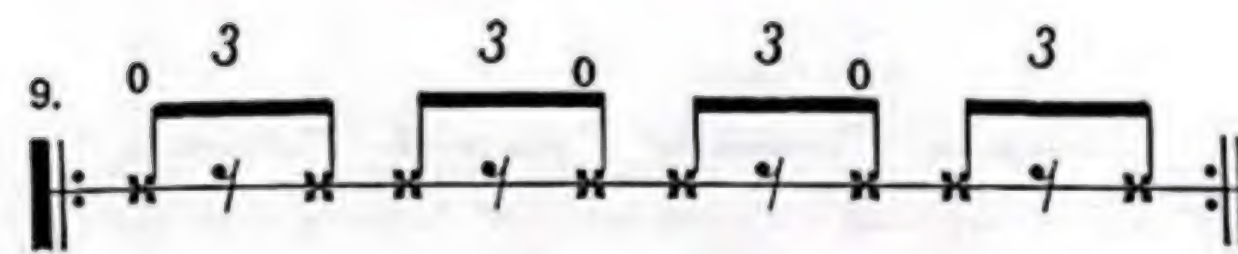
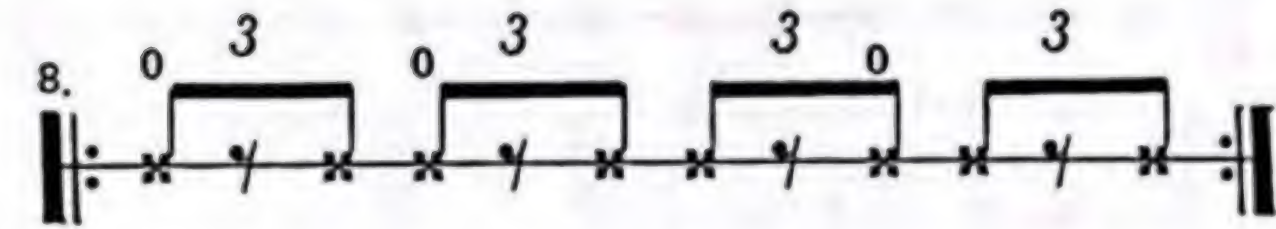
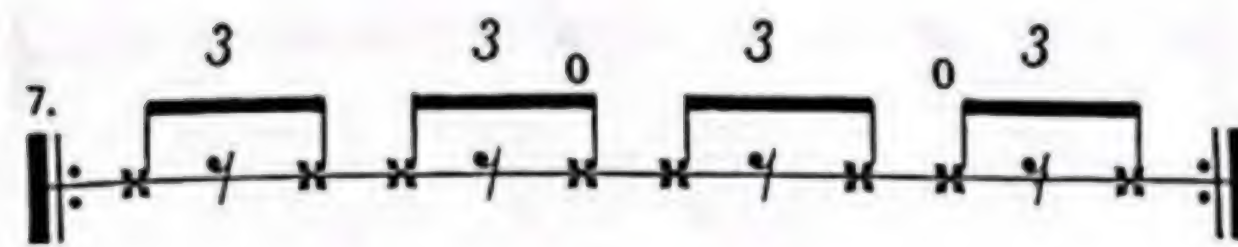
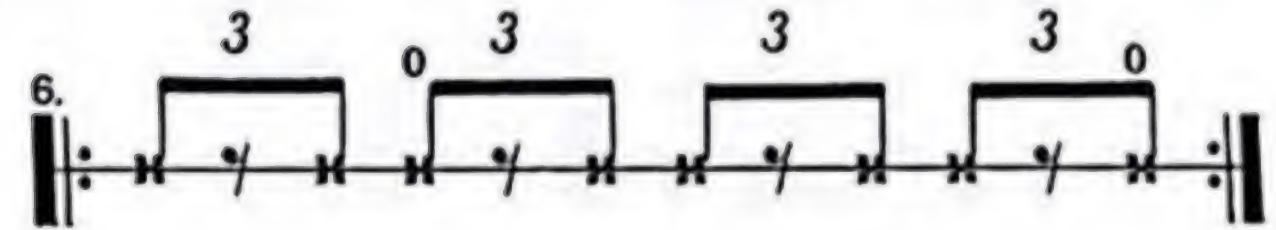
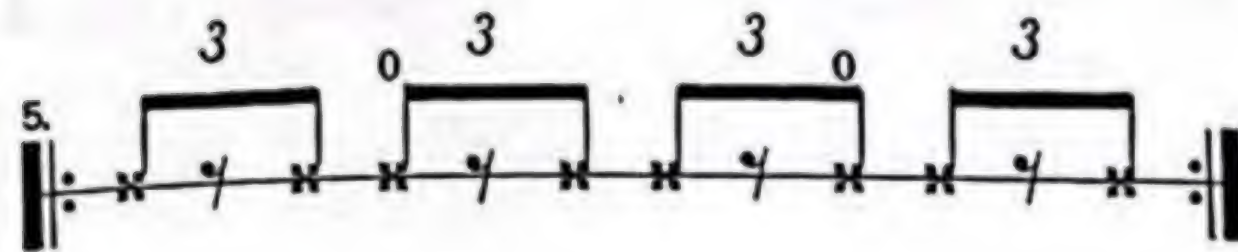
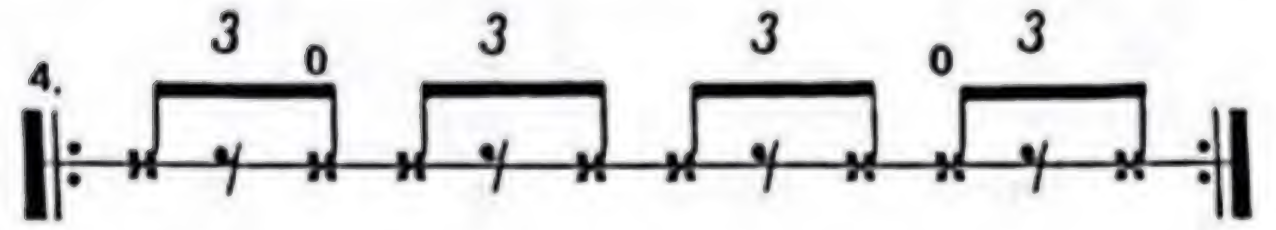
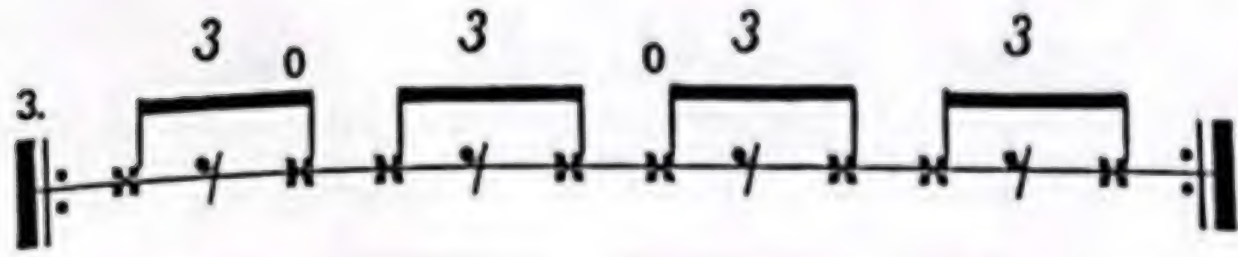
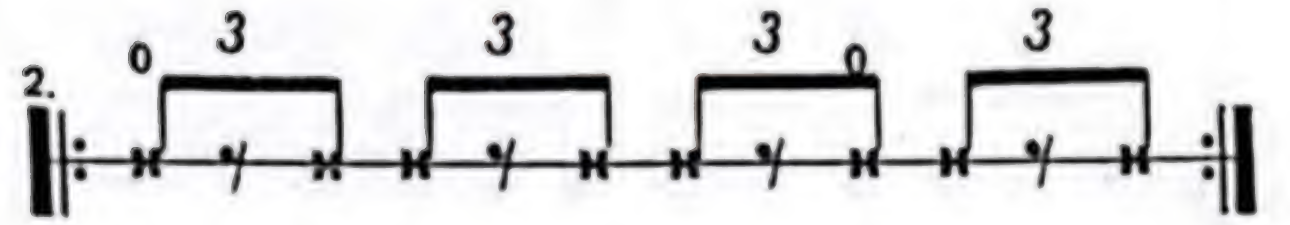
Hi Hat
Snare
BassHi Hat
Snare
Bass

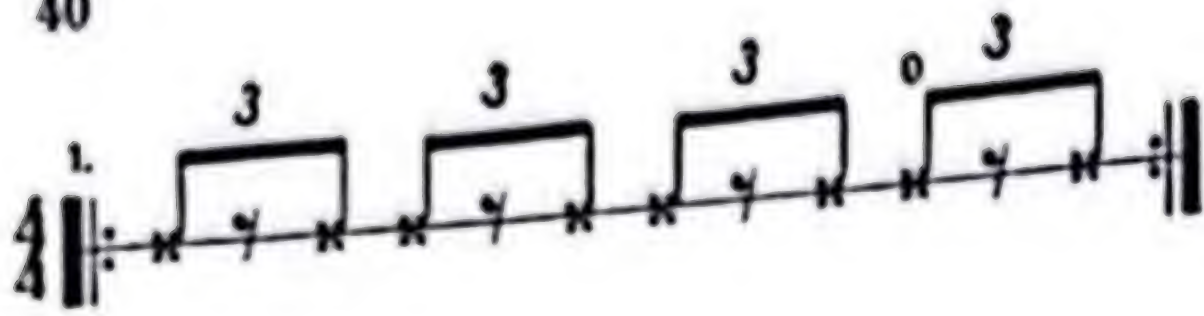
PART FOUR

DISCO DRUMMING FOR SHUFFLE ROCK

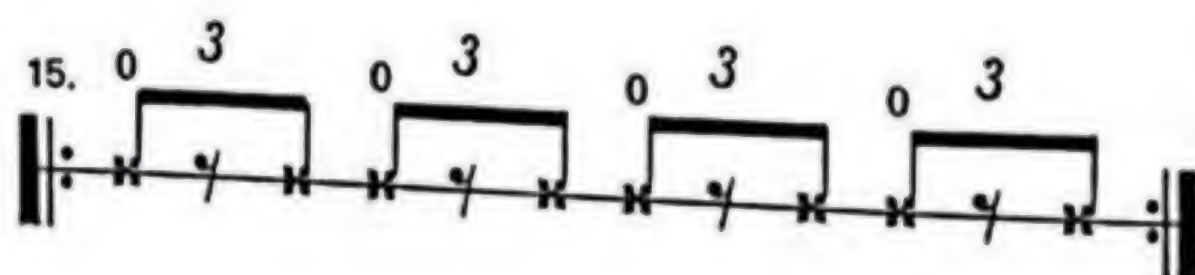
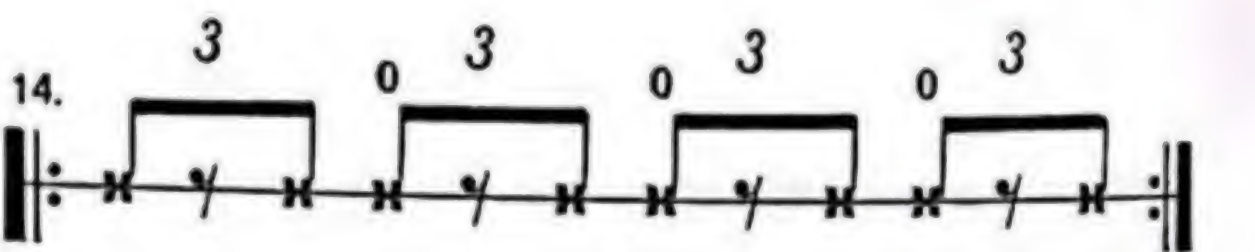
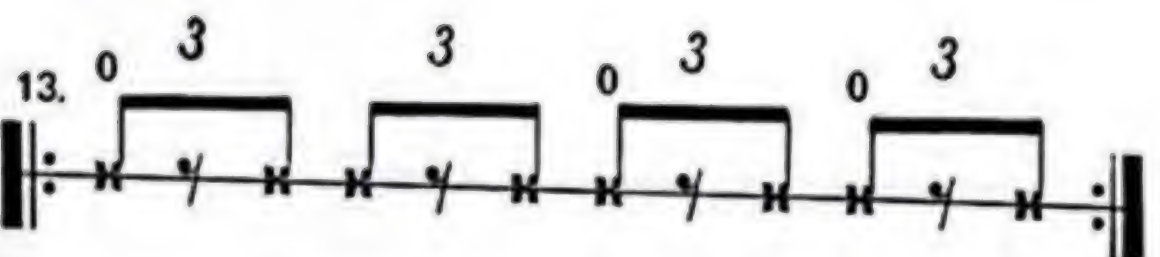
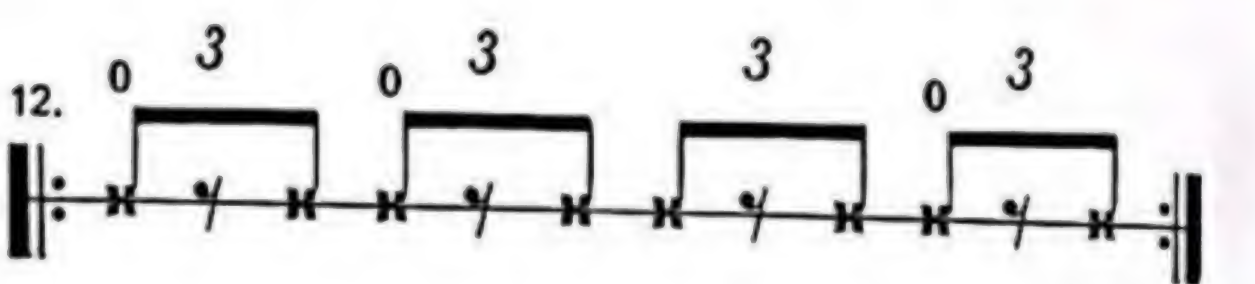
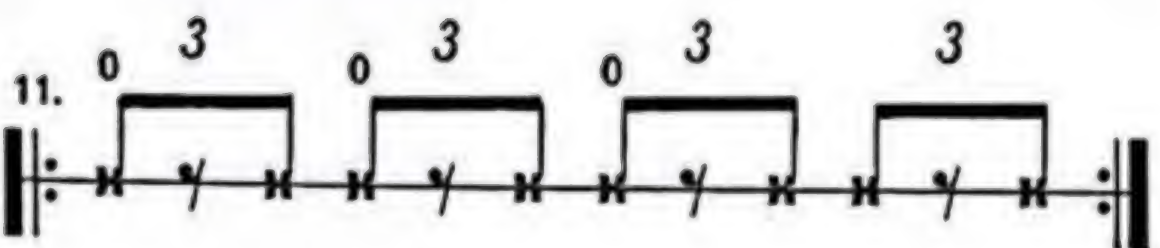
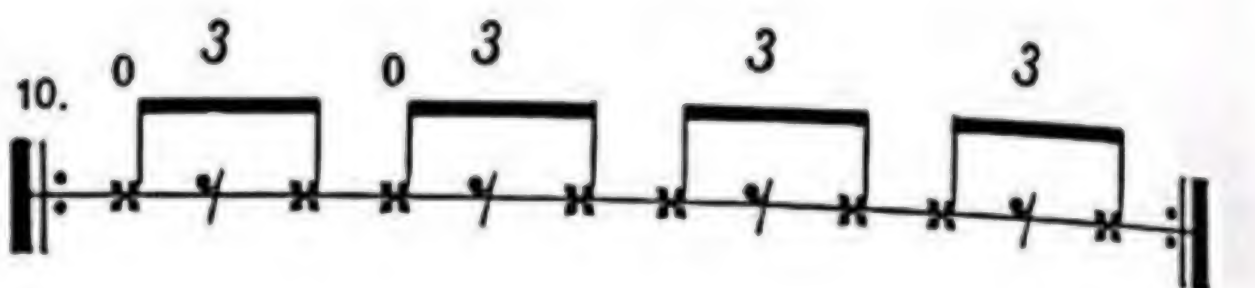
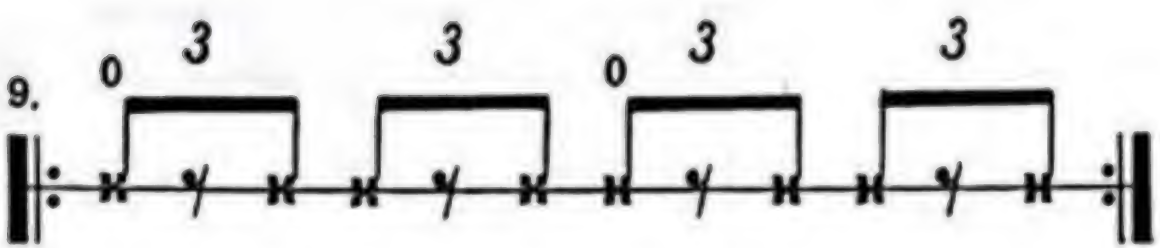
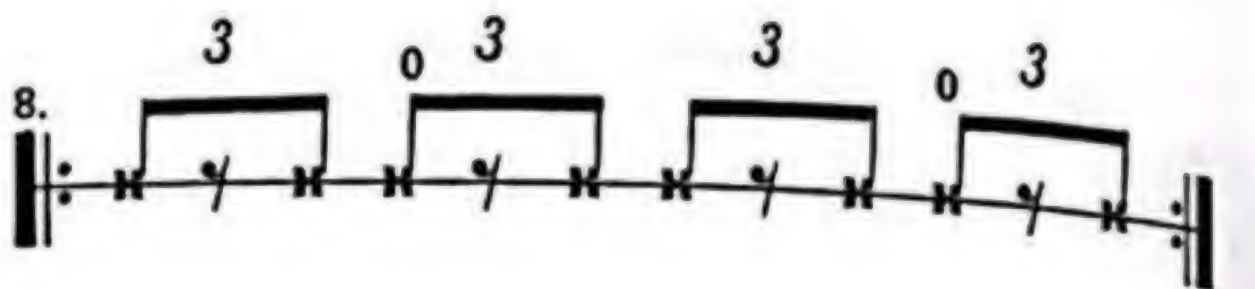
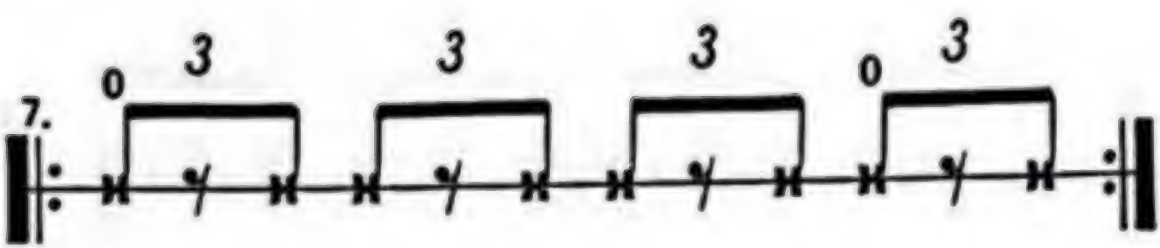
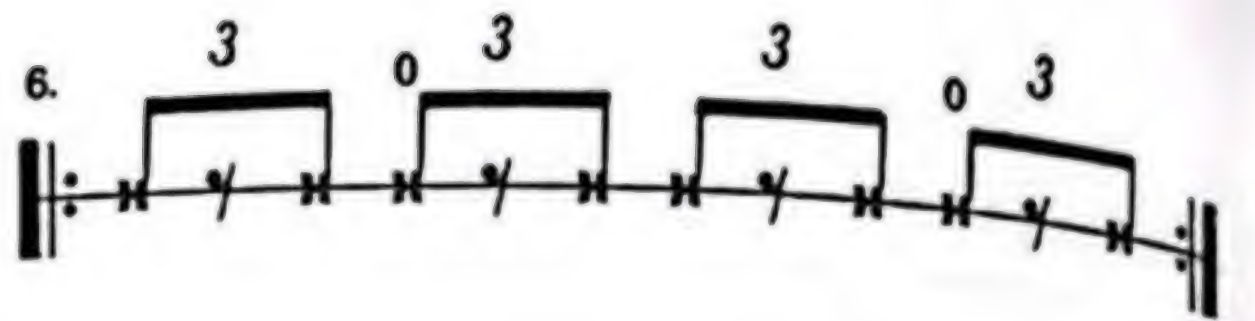
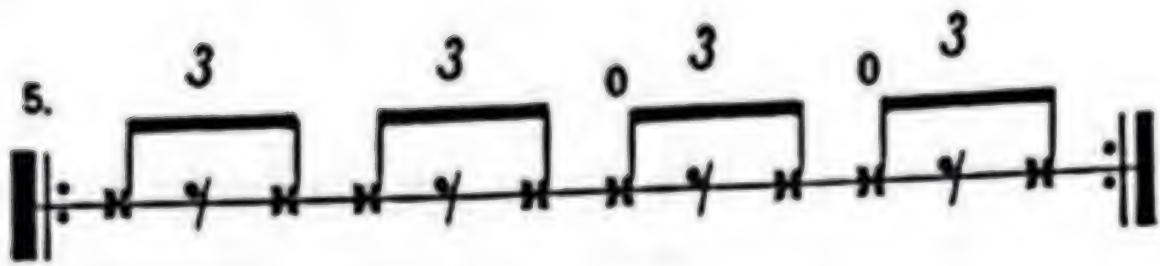
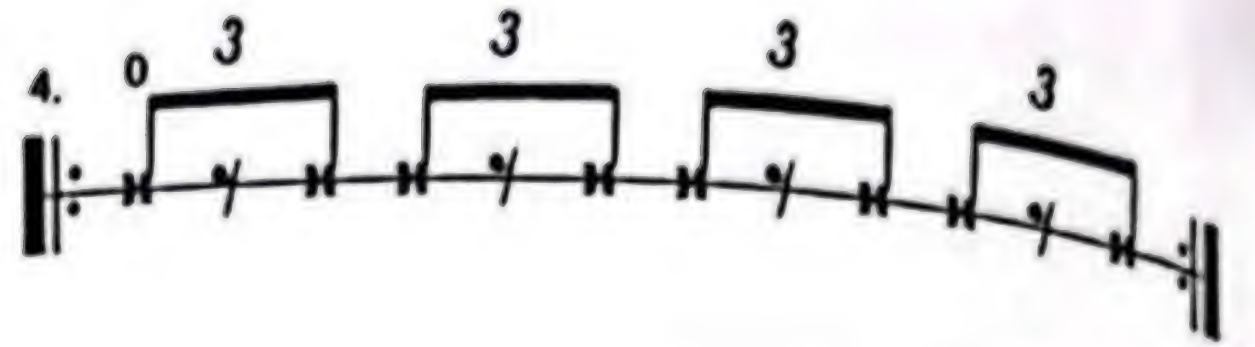
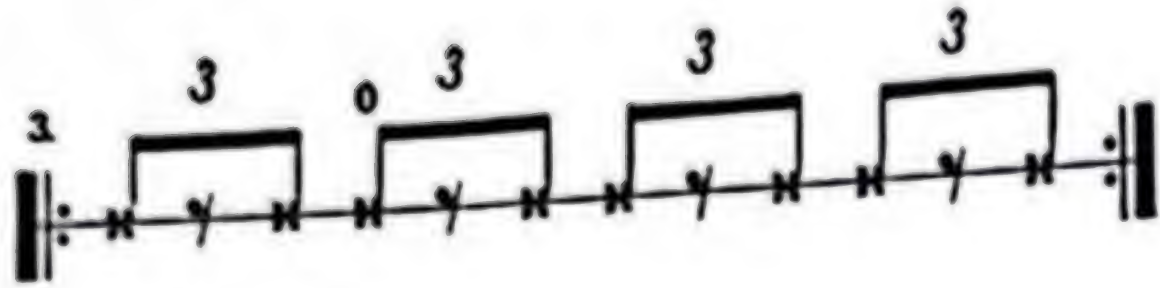
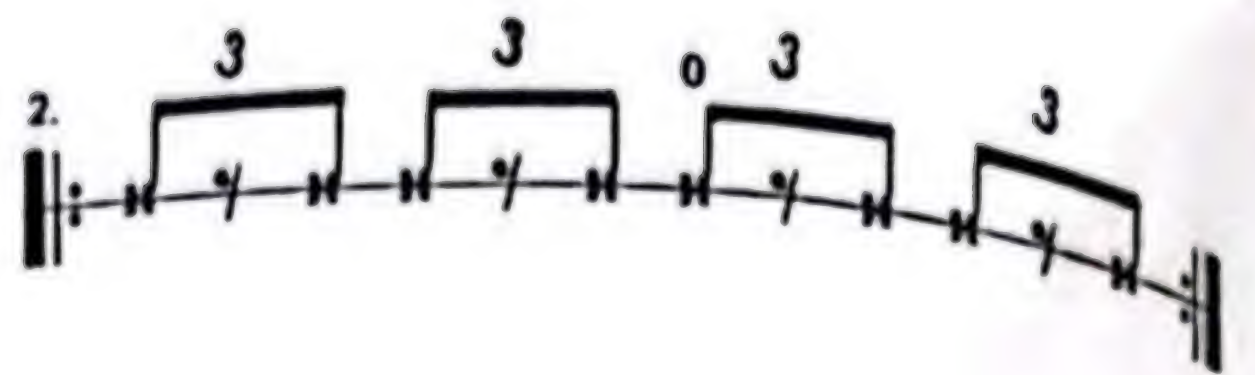


Hi Hat





Hi Hat



BASS AND SNARE VARIATIONS FOR SHUFFLE ROCK (KEEPING THE HI-HAT CLOSED)

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32.

OPENING AND CLOSING THE HI-HAT WITH VARIATIONS FOR BASS DRUM AND SNARE

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32.

PART FIVE

**DISCO DRUMMING
WITH A 6/8 FEEL**

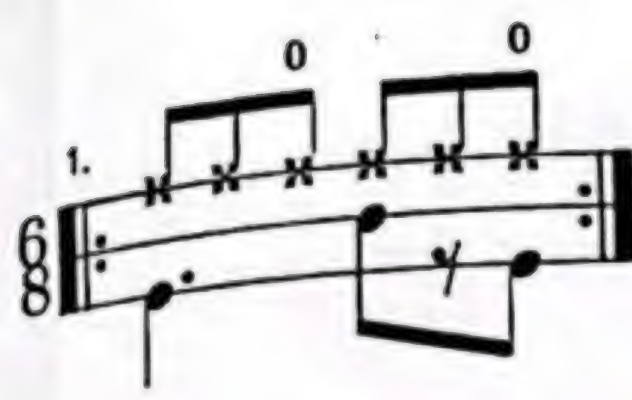
OPENING AND CLOSING THE HI-HAT WITH A 6/8 FEEL

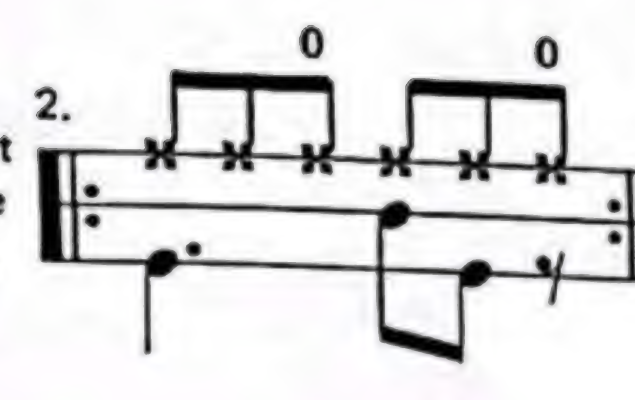
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16.

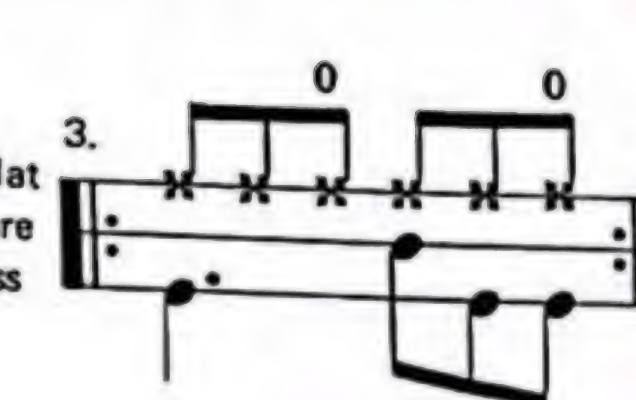
NOTE: In the above variations play the bass on one and four, and the snare only on four.

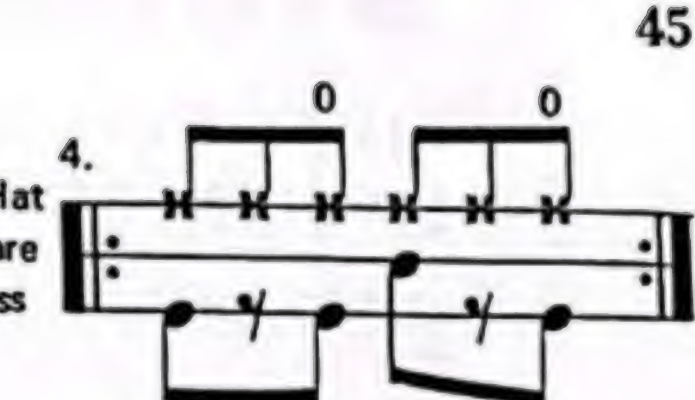
BASS DRUM VARIATIONS

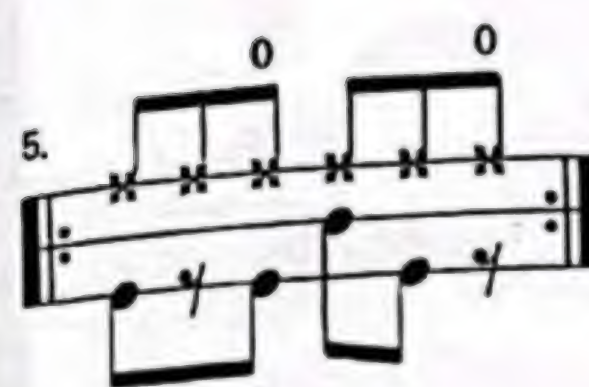
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20.

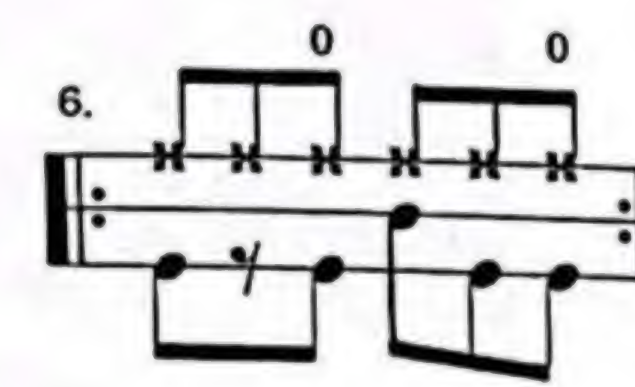
1.  Hi Hat
Snare
Bass

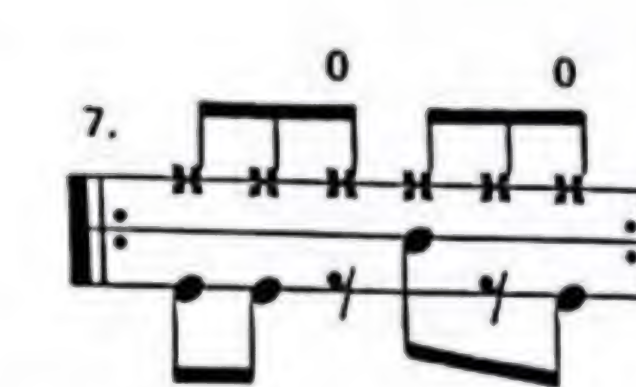
2.  Hi Hat
Snare
Bass


3.  Hi Hat
Snare
Bass


4.  Hi Hat
Snare
Bass

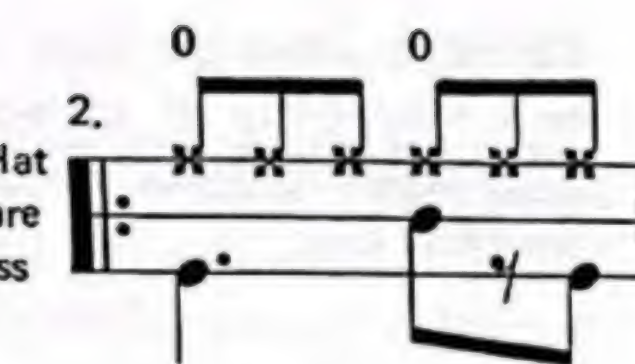
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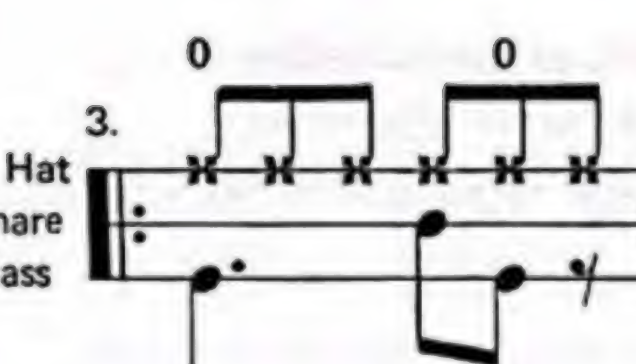
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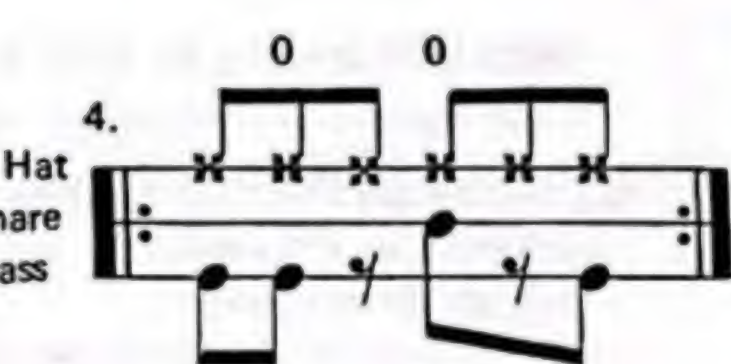
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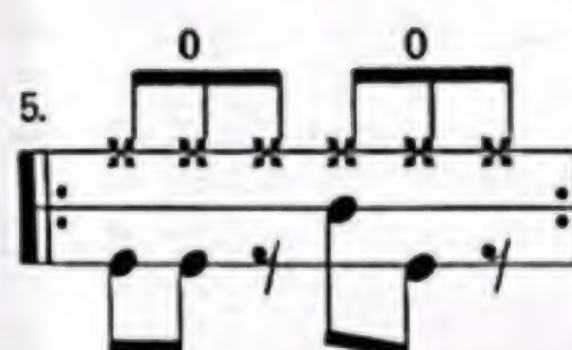
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1.  Hi Hat
Snare
Bass

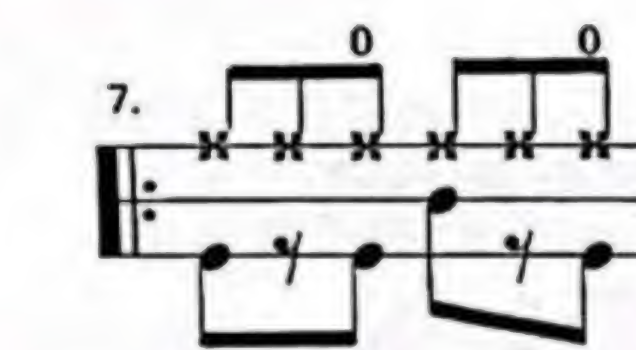
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Snare
Bass

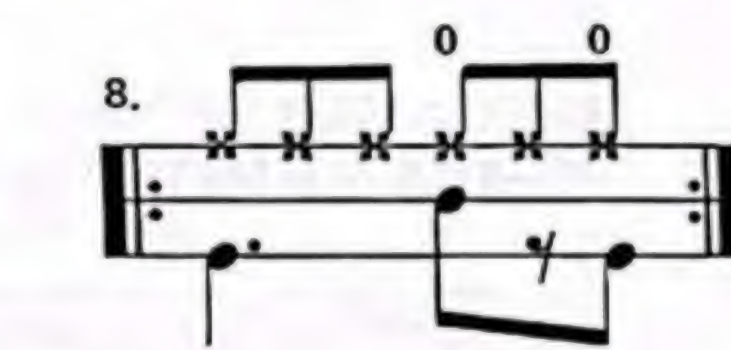
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Snare
Bass

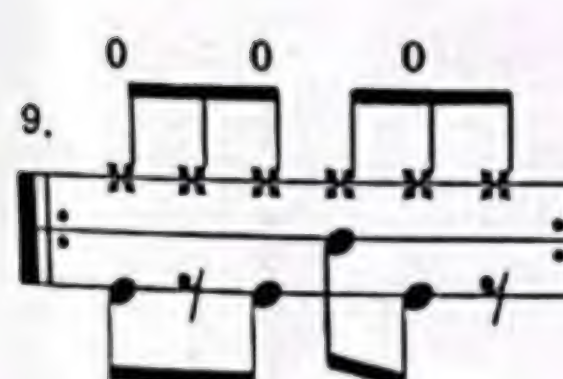
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Snare
Bass


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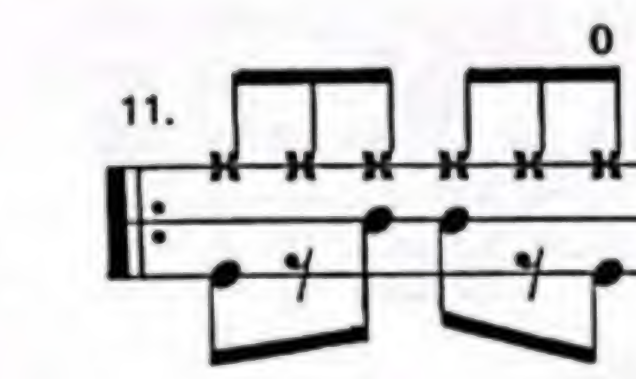
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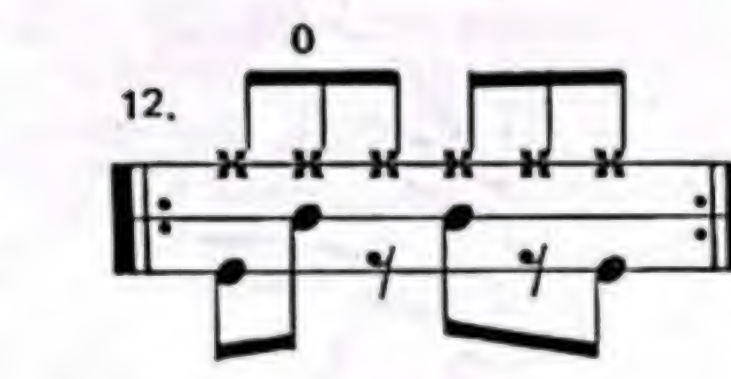
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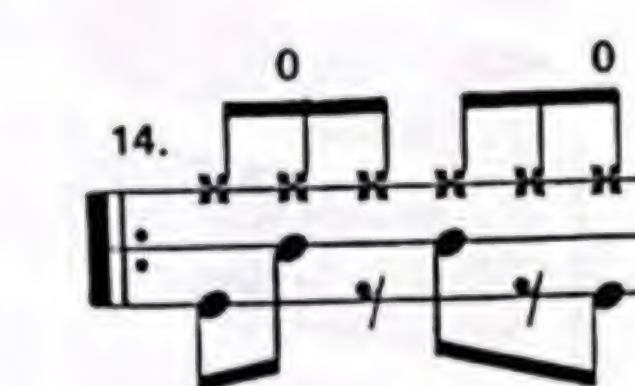
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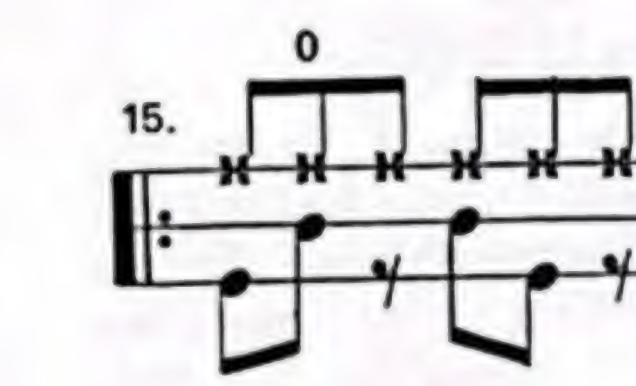
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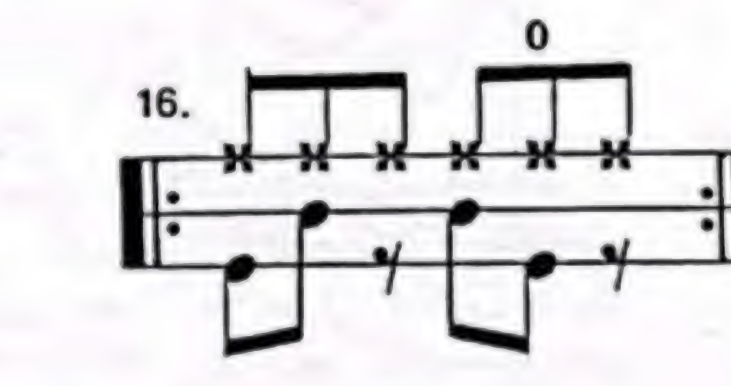
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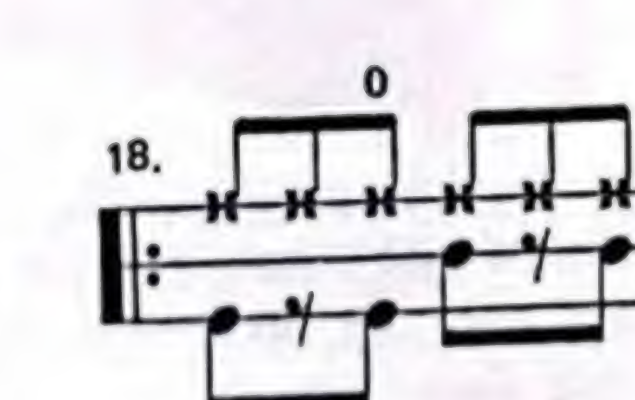
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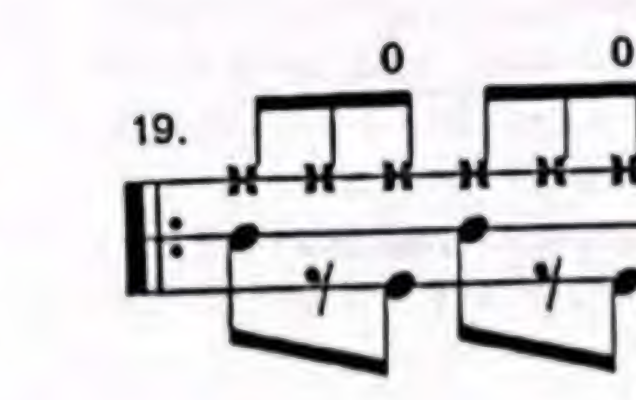
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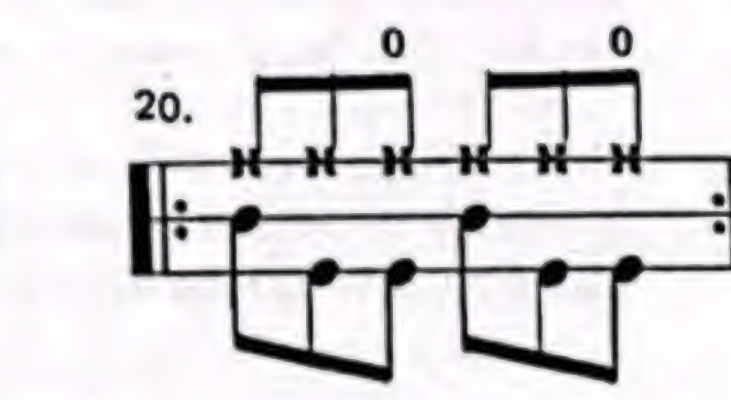
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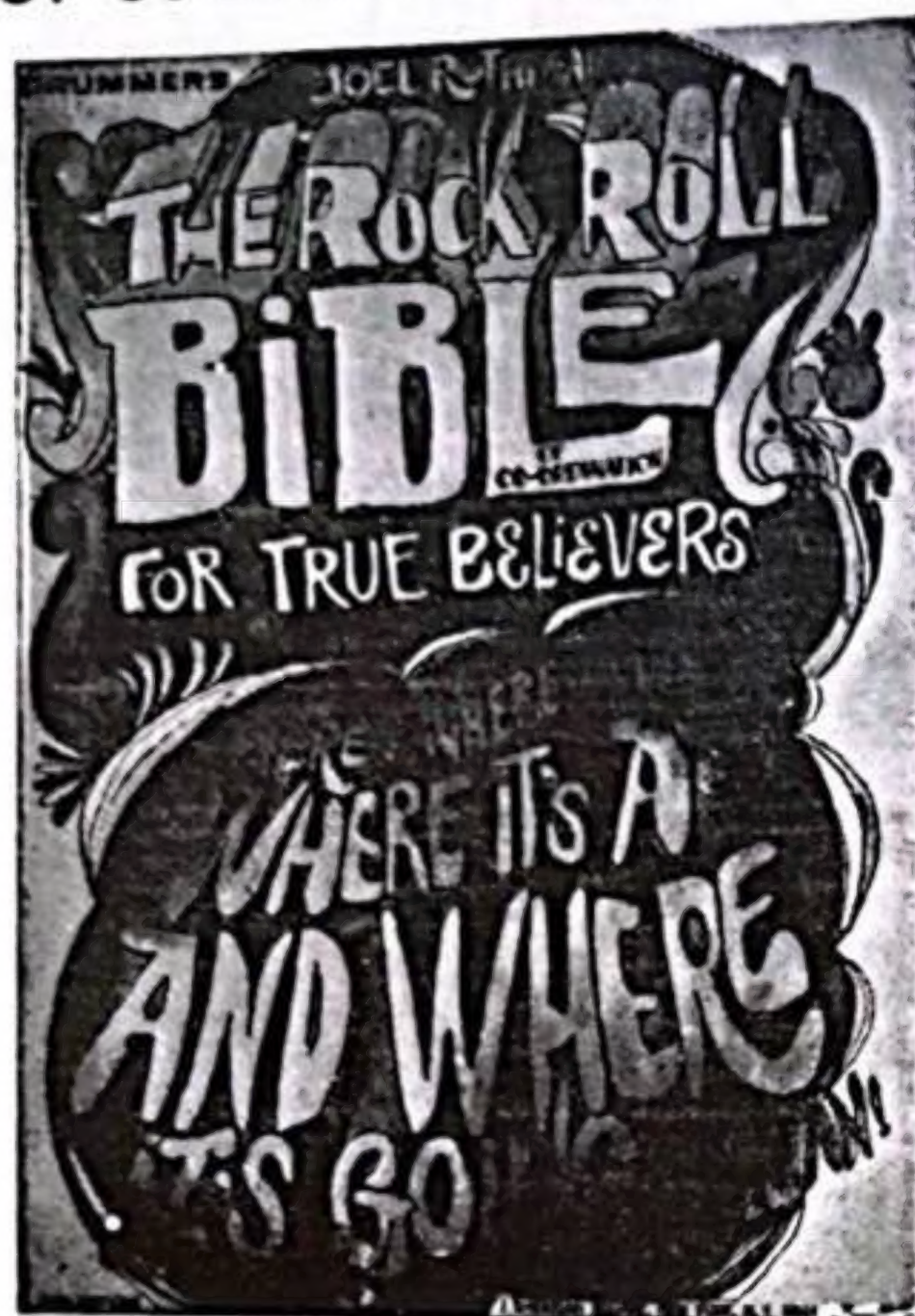
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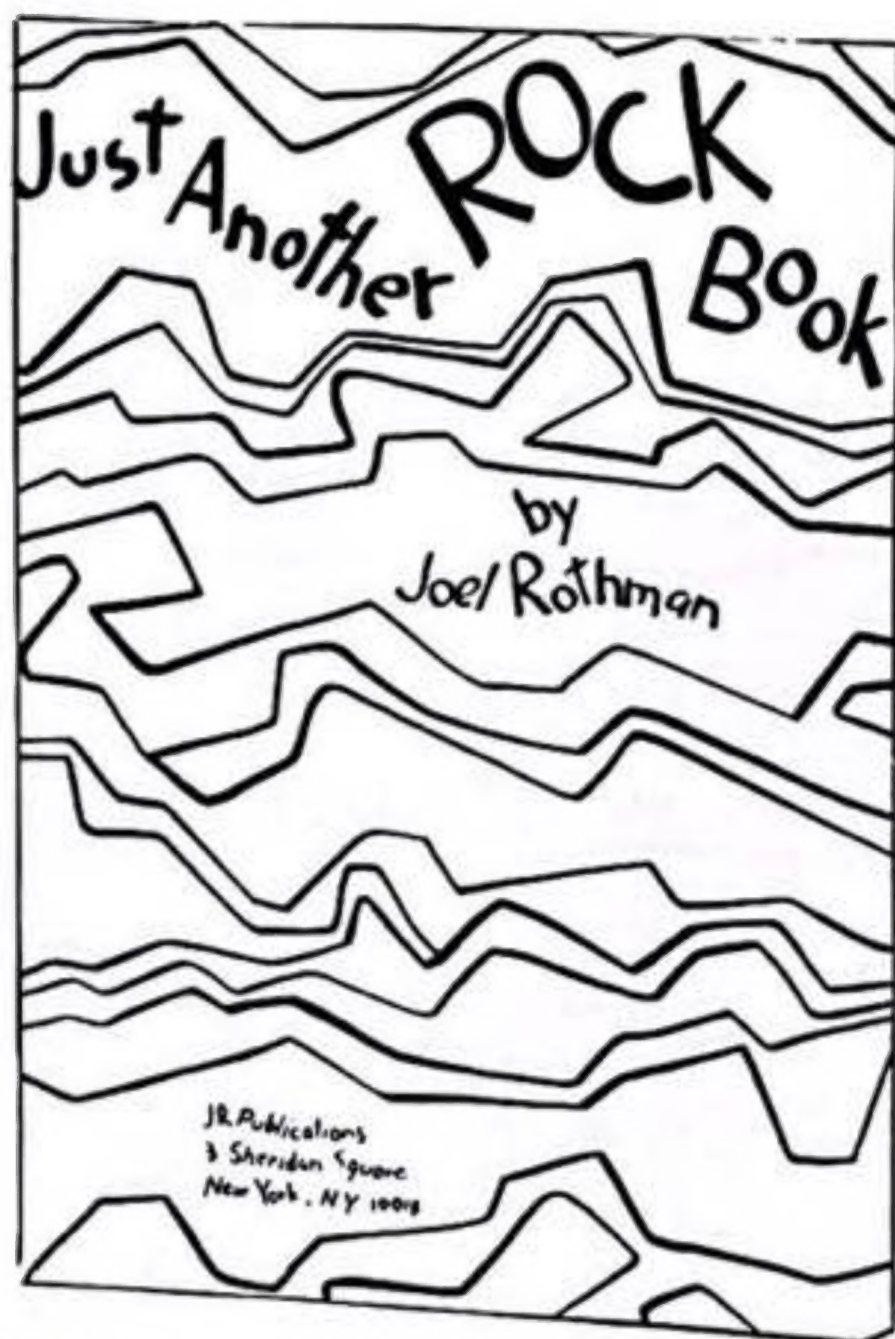
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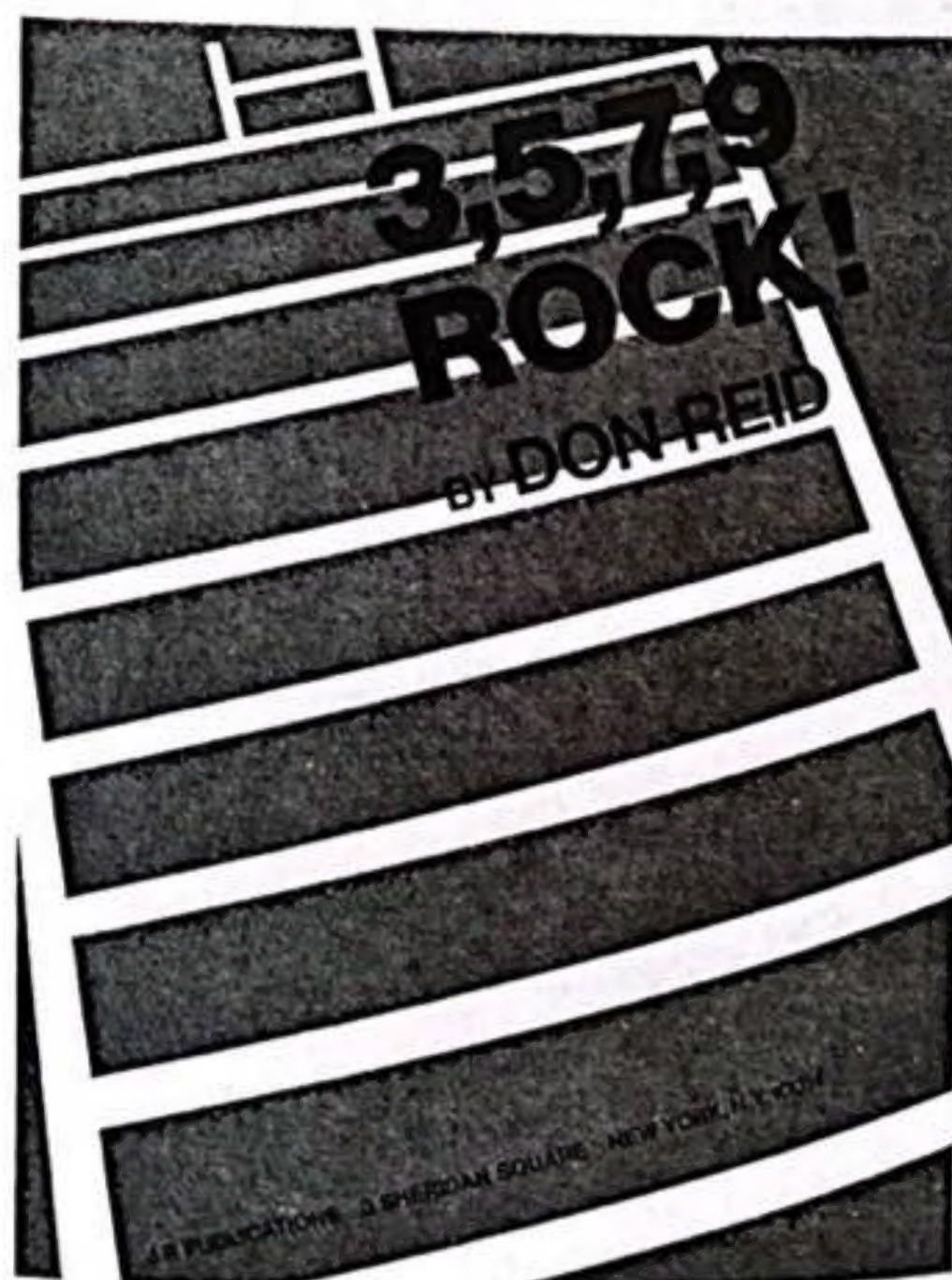
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